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## Ethics for Aspiring Entrepreneurs: Finding Education in Poetics

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of  
Philosophy

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## Abstract

Aspiring entrepreneurs need and want ethics education. Authentic, robust educational resources and personalized instructional methods are not, however, available in professional or scholarly settings. Textbooks focus on large corporations and do not provide a framework to coordinate various ethical theories. Alternatively, some instructors use literary theory and real life exemplars to frame and teach ethics. In my dissertation, I expand on the characterization of the entrepreneur as a liberal artist and poet, isolate the ethical dilemmas presented by the entrepreneurial setting, summarize the strengths and limits of four major ethical theories, and identify current educational aims, resources and instructional methods. To address limitations, I introduce and demonstrate foundational, conceptual and teleological links between ethics, education, entrepreneurship, and the Humanities in general and Poetics in particular. I show the ways in which four major ethical theories, virtue ethics, deontology, utilitarianism, and moral ecology are subsumed in and can be respectively operationalized by Frye's (1957) notions of character, literary plot, literary genre, and his overall stance with regard to Poetics. I apply Frye's Poetic structure to four autobiographies written by exemplary entrepreneurs across four generations from 1867 to 2007 in the beauty industry in order to establish that Frye's Poetics provides a much needed, grounding foundation, a natural, instructional approach, and that autobiography provides authoritative, comprehensive resources for ethics education for entrepreneurs. My exposition makes significant contributions to theory, pedagogy, and practice by explicating Poetics and autobiography as simple, authentic, iterative means for entrepreneurs and their educators find answers to the primary question in ethics, *What is a good life?*

## Keywords

Entrepreneurship, Ethics, Poetics, Humanism, Frye, Liberal Education, Autobiography

## Acknowledgments

I grew up with eight brothers and two sisters in a three-bedroom, century-old farmhouse located on three hundred acres in rural Ontario. Every year, month, and day, Mom and Dad navigated the successes and difficulties of earning commodity-based income through agriculture. I watched the interplay between my parents' will and Nature's will. In my spare time, I would read Indigenous legends, Greek and Roman myths, Aesop's fables, Irish folktales, Bible stories, song lyrics recorded in Black History books, and true stories about ordinary people achieving extraordinary things. Today, through this dissertation and with the love of many people, I am finally authoring, instead of reading about, the best role of my life.

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## Chapter 1

*The strong poet can be an entrepreneur, trying to remake the world in a vision that only she sees at first . . . her own version of the good life . . .*  
(Harmeling, Sarasvathy & Freeman, 2009, p. 356)

### 1 Introduction and Organization

My dissertation identifies, newly considers, and explicates the Humanities, and specifically Poetics and autobiography, as a natural foundation, an authentic approach to instruction, and a primary source of content in ethics education for entrepreneurs. The broad scope, simplicity, and inherent consistency of the use of Poetics in ethics education for entrepreneurs is demonstrated through an extensive literature review, the isolation and expansion of literary concepts and theories cited in the existing literature, and the application of Frye's (1957) literary framework to four autobiographies written by exemplary entrepreneurs whose lives span a period from 1867 to 2007 in the context of the cosmetics and beauty industry. The purpose of my exposition is to explicate and demonstrate Poetics as a grounding foundation, an iterative, instructional method, and autobiography as a robust resource by which entrepreneurs and their educators realize knowledge about the world, foster moral imagination, find inspiration for the future, and uncover answers to the primordial and perennial question in Ethics, *What is a good life?*

#### 1.1 Background and Rationale

For the past four years, I have been working as an independent consultant providing education services and developing training programs for entrepreneurs. No matter what I am contracted to do—wherever my clients are in the continuum from novice-and-ambitious to experienced-and-successful—their education needs inevitably turn to the subject of ethics. In my experience, the entrepreneurial context and entrepreneurs' education needs fall outside well-established scholarly literature and highly-developed areas of inquiry in education such as professional education, higher education, workforce development and adult education. Often, entrepreneurs are not enrolled in college, university, or continuing education programs rather they meet their learning needs in informal settings using personally selected educators and learning materials. They almost

exclusively rely on consultants and popular business books that they can find in the marketplace, often offering non-cumulative, inconsistent results. As a scholar at a faculty of education, a member of professional associations in education, and an instructor in higher education, I feel a significant burden to offer useful, well-grounded, high quality services, programs and materials to entrepreneurs to meet their educational needs in ethics.

Despite extensive searching, I have not been able to find an authentic, coordinated system of ethics from which I could derive education programs for entrepreneurs, nor have I found suitable textbooks to support instruction. Desiring programs and services suitable for my clients' existing levels of knowledge and interest, I consulted books which they recommended to me as useful or inspiring. Often, these books were autobiographies of exemplary entrepreneurs—the Canadian celebrity entrepreneur, W. Brett Wilson, for example, whose *Redefining Success* (2012) has encouraged many readers, or the late Mary Kay Ash, whose *Miracles Happen* (1981) tells the story of the founding of what became an international enterprise. These are rich autobiographies, reflective about life and about what matters in life beyond money; often they address ethics indirectly by means of their reflections about what makes a *good* life. As autobiographies, however, they address ethics only tacitly by means of example. The writers offer the stories of their lives as messages about the realities of entrepreneurial pressures, temptation, and chaos, and also about personal integrity and self-actualization. In a number of other best-selling business autobiographies, I found common aims and themes.

Although entrepreneurs need and desire ethics education, it seems that, with the exception of autobiographies, little that is substantive, well-grounded, or particularly suitable for educators and aspiring entrepreneurs is available. I turned to scholarly literature on ethics and on entrepreneurship in an attempt to locate potential resources and teaching methods, but this literature, too, identifies a need for ethics education to meet the specific requirements of entrepreneurs (e.g., Dees & Starr, 1992; Hannafey, 2003; Harris & Sapienza, 2009, 2011; Getzler-Linn & Ferrill, 2006; Stuart, 2014). Analysis of textbooks used in entrepreneurship courses revealed a number of shortcomings:

- content in textbooks is derived from and targeted to large corporations (Driscoll & Tesfayohannes, 2009);
- perspectives on ethics tend to be narrow (Anderson, 2014); and,
- integration into entrepreneurial practice is limited (Tsfayhannes & Driscoll, 2010).

As an alternative, a number of scholars have promoted the adoption of the literary arts as both content and method for teaching ethical issues. Benson (1992) advocated the use of literary classics as an educational resource, and Williams (1997) showed that drama could stimulate moral imagination to help entrepreneurs solve ethical dilemmas. As well, Harmeling, Sarasvathy, and Freeman (2009), Nandram and Samsom (2008), and Zeigenfuss (2007) have used personal history and life story methodology to focus on and better understand the ethical nature of entrepreneurs. Gilbert (2002) recommends a literary view of the entrepreneur; more specifically, Harmeling et al. (2009) and Velamuri (2002) use the metaphor of *poet* to describe the essence of the entrepreneur. In my inquiry, I have chosen to follow the lead of these and other scholars who argue that features of literary works and methods—the disposition of character, the moral of a story, the consequences of actions on self, others, and society—inherently address many ethical issues, and can therefore be applied to autobiographies which, in my experience, speak to entrepreneurs and inspire them. My dissertation demonstrates the ethical, literary and practical validity of using Frye’s (1957) literary framework and autobiographies in order to teach ethics to entrepreneurs.

### 1.1.1 Definition of Poetics

The word “Poetics” is derived from the word *poet* which means “to create” and “ics” means the “*study of*”; Poetics, then, means the “study of creation.” In the *Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, Baldick (1990) defines Poetics as

the general principles of poetry, or of literature in general, or the theoretical study of these principles. As a body of theory, poetics is concerned with the distinctive features of poetry (or literature as a whole) with its languages, forms, genres and modes of composition . . . . (p. 172)



Poetics differs in origin from other approaches to texts that also address ethics—texts such as scripture, legal documents, and academic theory. Poetics addresses collections of popular or imaginative works.

Poetics' subject matter is human thought and action (Spingarn, 1963), and the metamorphosis or outcomes of human thoughts and actions. In *Moral Discourse in a Pluralistic World*, Daniel Vokey (2001) clarifies the term “world view” as

a set of beliefs about the fundamental nature of things. . . . [A] world view is roughly equivalent to what others have called a Weltanschauung [a wide, world perception] (Kearney, 1984, p. 28), a theory of existence (Sprigge 1985, p. 9), or a vision of reality (Greene, 1981) . . . . Implicitly or explicitly, world views typically include beliefs about the origin, history and structure of the cosmos; the kinds of objects that exist in the world; the kinds of relationships that hold among these objects; and the nature of humans and their place in the world . . . . (pp. 86-87)

Poetics reveals world views and simple beliefs, with the purpose of offering insight into the fundamental nature of existence, reality, and relationships between human beings, nature, and the Divine. Poetics provides information and options about a way of life.

### 1.1.2 Poetics as a Foundation in Ethics Education for Entrepreneurs

Scholars who have studied ethics education for entrepreneurs are emphatic that, as an area of inquiry, such study categorically falls within the aims and efforts of Ethics rather than only within the Social Sciences field of Economics (e.g., Bucholz & Rosenthal, 2005; Cornwall & Naughton 2003; Gilbert, 2009; Gustafson, 2009; Hicks, 2009; Machan 1999). According to Kristeller (1988), Ethics and Poetics have been long-standing, integral elements of a liberal education from as early as the Italian Renaissance.

During the Renaissance period in Italy, Poetics uncovered different and new ethical ideas as represented in dialogues, letters, and poetry translated, created, or performed in vernacular Italian language by scholars for lay people, particularly craftspeople and merchants—the entrepreneurs of the day. Ethics and Poetics as a combined area of study

focused on individuals and on humanity as a whole as embodied in imaginative poetry, biography, and popular works from different historical periods, geographic places, and circumstances. Interest in these forms of oral and written texts arose in response to the ecclesiastical and imperial feudal systems of the time and their respective, inaccessible theological and legal texts that were available only in the monasteries and universities. Francesco Petrarca (1304-1374), an iconic scholar and poet, defended poetry, eloquence, and ethics against the authoritarianism of philosophic dogma and scientific scholasticism (Kristeller, 1988). Petrarca engaged with poetry and performed in the marketplace in order to facilitate meaning-of-life dialogue and debate among craftspeople and merchants and lay, even illiterate, people (Kristeller, 1988).

As marketplace demand as well as financial resources increased, craftspeople and merchants funded scholars who were then able to build their own personal libraries comprised of private collections not available through the universities. In turn, scholars were able to continue the translation of original writings of the ancient Greeks and gained exposure to new perspectives including Aristotle's *Poetics*, among other works. Scholars also learned Hebrew and Arabic in order to read the Koran and Arabic philosophy (Kristeller, 1988). Their discoveries led scholarly poets to write and perform extensively on such ethical themes as "fate and free will, the highest good, the various virtues and vices, human will and intellect, the immortality of the soul, and the dignity of [humankind]" (Kristeller, 1988, p. 135). The tradition of creating and studying popular and worldly texts continued on through to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Europe, where there continued to be a significant growth in merchants and craftspeople who eventually also started and expanded their own private libraries stocked with poetry, worldly texts, and ideas unknown to their predecessors (Kristeller, 1988, p. 136). Now literate and informed, craftspeople and merchants became the general, reading public; and *Poetics* provided them with exemplars of both worldly knowledge and inspiration in order to determine a way of life—a practice which continues today.

### 1.1.3 Introduction to *Poetics*' Ethical Aims

Through the ages, many and varied defenses of *Poetics* appear because of the importance of the analysis of popular literature in democracy and in the freedom of thought and

belief upon which democracy is founded (Aristotle, 1932; Boccaccio, 2011; Sidney, 1595; Shelley, 1840; Edmundson, 1995; Seaton, 2014). Baldick (1990) states that one of the purposes of Poetics is to protect individuals from the “moralists and censors” of the times (p. 48). Springarn (1963), Edmundson (1995), Machan (1999), and Seaton (2014) isolate the academic foundations that reduce the status of Poetics in western scholarship: Plato’s view that poets have no place in an ideal republic because they misinform and corrupt citizens; Aquinas’ narrow scholasticism forced upon a pluralistic citizenry; Descartes’ introduction of reason into conceptualizations of the human spirit; and Kant’s emphasis on rationality and social contracts. The sequence of thought represented by these scholars forms the foundations of both western traditions of inquiry--continental scholarship that relies on authoritative description--and, analytic scholarship, which relies on logic. The respective study of literature and ethics in western scholarship framed by either, for example, authority (Bloom, 1987) or logic (Anscombe, 1958) leaves no place for popular creation or belief. Seaton (2014) refers to scholarship according to such moralists and censors as “Theory”. His capitalization of the word “Theory” means authority and logic take the place of any Higher Force that a human being may know.

Conversely, Shelley (1840), Rorty (1989), and Edmundson (1995) argue that Poetics hold primary importance above theory and empirical inquiry. Mousley (2011) and Guarino (Guarino, 2011 in Boccaccio, 2011) conceptualize Poetics as human theology. Seaton (2014) laments that scholars interested in humanistic Poetics are considered “non-persons, invisible and irrelevant” in current, widespread postmodernist, social criticism. Edmundson (1995) sides with Poetics in the “ancient quarrels between literature and philosophy”. Some defenses of poetry manifest more tacitly in the forms of scholarly premises for Poetics including human biology (Gold, 2001, 2002), cognitive science (Gaskin, 2015), critical politics (Mousley, 2010, 2011), and authority (Bloom, 1987). Such arguments newly locate Poetics within contemporary scholarship; however, biologic, cognitive, critical, or authoritative justifications ultimately rely on “Theory” and fact-value or rational-relative debates about reality (Vokey, 2001, p. 16). Prerequisites of “true” and “justified” leave little room for simple creation and belief, or for the world views offered by means of Poetics.

Theoretical defenses of Poetics, too, can impose a limiting lens as well as obscure the direct observation of creations and beliefs found in original, literary works. Poetics need not be elevated to *primary* place, but it is important for it to hold *a place*. Poetics is simplified and clarified through its origins and aims. Poetics is primarily a *method*. It is foremost a popular means of conveying a message to others about the world; and, as Kristeller (1988) showed in the setting of the Italian Renaissance, Poetics is a liberal means to knowing about the world through the direct study of messages in the forms of texts and performances collected from various times, places, and circumstances in order to isolate what Mousley (2010, p. 820) calls “resonating particulars” which reveal the essence of human life and humanity.

#### 1.1.4 Poetics Applied to Popular Literature for Ethics Education

Poetic methods directly applied to varied examples provides is insight into the way the world *is*. It reveals truths about the world by means of recurring life and ethical themes as they appear time and time again despite wide geographical, historical, or circumstantial origins among popular works such as myth, legend, songs, narrative, drama, and biographic stories. For example, Hellenic legends may be compared to traditional stories of other peoples of diverse cultures and periods—China, India, the Middle East, the Pre-Columbian Americas, or Africa—in order to facilitate full understanding and appreciation (Vernant, 1999, p. ix). The world view discovered through Poetics as a method provides the basis for a way of life, for predicting outcomes, and for decision making about what actions to take. In chaotic or skeptical times, as is often the case in new entrepreneurial ventures, world views, by means of example, can bring hope and affirm belief in oneself, one’s creation, and one’s purpose.

The most interesting and relevant Poetic exemplar that I found to illustrate these principles is *Concerning Famous Women* written by Giovanni Boccaccio between 1355 and 1359 C.E. Boccaccio’s collection was the first set of biographies in Western literature exclusively about women. Boccaccio’s treatise describes the lives of 106 women in myth and history spanning time from Eve to Boccaccio’s contemporary, Queen Giovanna I of Naples, and place from Egypt, Ethiopia, Jerusalem, Germany, France, and England, to mythical lands. According to Guarino (Boccaccio, 2011) who translated

Boccaccio's biographic collection, it was important to Boccaccio that women be granted the right to independent will and action; the purpose of his treatise was to inspire them to reach their full potential. Boccaccio (2011) writes,

I have been quite astonished that women have had so little attention from writers of this sort that they have gained no recognition in any work devoted to them, although it can be clearly seen in the more voluminous histories that some women have acted with . . . much strength and valour . . . . I have therefore begun to describe them in order to give them some reward. (p. xxxvii)

Boccaccio combines Poetics and scholarly writing in a highly advanced and creative work for his time. He placed unlikely subjects together: Christian and non-Christian, historical and mythical, Italian and foreign, royal and lay, and young as well as older women. Through many and varied examples, universal truths and primary principles about freedom, duties, obligations, virtue, and vice are inductively revealed; and such truths and principles offer didactic lessons about life and the probable effects of certain types of actions, and inspiration about activities that have proven to lead to a better future. The combination of unlikely subjects produces new, inspirational knowledge; it helps to illuminate both individual freedom and individuals' bonds to others; to dispel gloom about individuals and humanity while at the same time providing warnings about what might engender such gloom (Boccaccio, 2011). Boccaccio (2011) concludes,

I have omitted numerous famous women . . . . I could not mention all of them, for time which triumphs over fame has destroyed their names. To others, I say that it is possible that some things have been improperly included, and I will easily believe it, for it often happens that a writer is deceived not only by ignorance of the matter but by the excessive love he has of his work. If I have done this, I am sorry and I ask, for the glory of honourable studies, that wiser men tolerate with kindly spirit what has not been done properly. And, if anyone has a charitable soul, let him correct what has been improperly written by adding to it or deleting and improve it so that the work will flourish for someone's benefit, rather than perish torn by the jaws of the malicious without being of service to anyone. (p. 251)

Poetics may frequently lack historical accuracy, empirical validity, or theoretical grounding; it is nevertheless worthwhile because something believable and inspiring emerges when original, imaginative and popular collections are analyzed for universal, primary principles about life.

### 1.1.5 Resurgence of Poetics and Relevance of my Dissertation

Many contemporary scholars have embraced Poetics in fields relevant to the focus of my dissertation—fields including education (Smith, 2006, 2009, and 2013), ethics (Cave, 2009; Gorman 2005), business (Spitzeck, 2009), and entrepreneurship (Kurzweil, 2005).

In keeping with Poetics' universal sensibility, promise for expanded perspectives and even greater ingenuity will be found in Aboriginal contexts (McLeod, 2014), Asian settings (Kim, 2008), African literature (Anozie, 1981; Heiss, 2006), and Indian studies (Gerow, 1985; Chaudhury, 1961; Kantak, 1995; Rayan, 1994). Scholars engaged in Poetics will continue to look beyond many boundaries to offer ideas about the world, human ontology, and relationships with nature and the Divine which in turn will inspire new realities and scholarship. Koppikar (2014), for example,

aims to study how meaning at the level of abidha, lakshana, vyanjana and ultimately rasa is conveyed through language in poetry as viewed by ancients with special emphasis on the dhvani theory propounded by Anandvardhana. Examples are cited from Gathasaptasati (a Prakrit text), and William Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying*, and Shakespearean plays. (p. 351)

Poetics is a broad, universally-oriented area within the Humanities that collects and inductively analyses imaginative and popular literary examples in order to directly uncover beliefs about the world, knowledge about patterns in the way the world works, and inspiration about ways of life. Such aims are central to ethics and education scholarship.

The focus of my dissertation is ethics education, through Poetics applied to autobiography, for entrepreneurs. In essence, my work is an inquiry into human nature and the search for freedom through economic change, as depicted in popular, real life

literary examples. The purpose of the use of Poetics as a broad research sensibility in my exposition is to isolate and expand upon the “ethos” derived from current literature presenting and seeking a world view by which entrepreneurs and their educators can find authentic, useful answers within the vast subject of ethics and its broad pursuits, and address such questions as “*What is a good life?*”

## 1.2 Organization

My dissertation is organized into five additional chapters in which I consider three sets of literary collections. The next chapter is presented in three sections. First, I isolate the current world views, beliefs, tenets, and foundational principles of ethics education for entrepreneurs as found in a collection of eighty-two literary works selected for this dissertation. These eighty-two sources comprise theoretical articles and empirical studies which include entrepreneurial texts, interviews, survey responses, personal stories, and other literary works, dating from 500 BC to the present and including settings in North America, the United Kingdom, Africa, Latin America, China, India, and continental Europe. I consider these diverse literary works as a whole in order to distill the main beliefs about the nature of ethics, education and entrepreneurs. The result of this process is my contention that the primary essence of the entrepreneur is comparable to that of the poet or liberal artist; and that the entrepreneur is aspiring to a good life as well as to becoming more than the neo-classical *homo economicus* stereotype popular in some media and scholarly narratives. Also in this section I summarize the types of ethical dilemmas, and personal and environmental pressures and temptations, that influence ethical decision-making across the entrepreneurial life span—as the entrepreneur develops from being an individual-with-an-idea to becoming the founder of an organization to achieving iconic status as head of an institution.

In the second section of Chapter Two, I synthesize the four major ethical perspectives--virtue, deontology, utilitarianism and pragmatism/moral ecology--and the arguments in favor of or against their usefulness in teaching ethics to entrepreneurs. In the final section of Chapter Two, I identify three prevailing aims of ethics education for entrepreneurs: knowledge about life and the way the world works; moral imagination; and, inspiration for a better future. I present the theoretical and practical shortcomings of existing

textbooks in terms of achieving educational aims. Finally, I summarize promising yet embryonic examples of instructional resources and methods that draw on literary arts.

In Chapter Three, in order to further pursue Poetics as a foundational methodology to ethics education for entrepreneurs, I address three literary works selected from my eighty-two sources: Richard Rorty's *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (1989), Allan Bloom's *Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (1973), and Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957). With Rorty and Bloom, I offer a brief overview, then outline explicitly the ways in which both ultimately rely on Frye's Poetics.

In the remainder of Chapter Three, I focus on Northrop Frye's visionary ideas about Poetics that (to my good fortune in undertaking this dissertation) was created for the lay reader as an introductory guide to general and universal principles of Poetics. Next, I explain the ways in which Frye offers a method to decode popular and imaginative exemplars to uncover patterns in life through literary elements including character, plot, and genre. Frye's Poetics provides a view into the ways in which stories (and conceivably business ventures as well as life) uniformly unfold and end in only four patterns of narrative: Comedy, Romance, Tragedy or Satire. To some extent, Frye's Poetics provides insight, into the way the world and life works, or at least the ways in which poets have understood the world to work in the over two thousand years of Poetics that Frye considered in the development of his system. I compare the four major ethical theories found in the scholarly sources addressed in Chapter Two to Frye's notions of character, literary plot, genre, and Poetics as a whole; and I show how the major ethical theories are essentially subsumed in Poetics. I conclude by suggesting that Poetics, and particularly Frye's guide, is a primary approach for teaching ethics, to entrepreneurs and others, in order to reveal knowledge about life, foster moral imagination, and inspire hope; and, also, that Frye's is a useful approach to identifying and predicting life circumstances and to answering in a broad, robust, and iterative way the question, *What is a good life?*

In Chapter Four, I demonstrate the usefulness of Frye's Poetics through the analysis of a third and last set of literary works consisting of four autobiographies written by iconic entrepreneurs from the cosmetics and beauty industry, four entrepreneurs whose lives



span a period from 1867 to 2007: Madam C. J. Walker's (Bundles, 2001) *On Her Own Ground*; Estee Lauder's (1985) *A Success Story*; Mary Kay Ash's (1981) *Miracles Happen*; and Anita Roddick's (1992) *Body and Soul*. As the essence of ethics education is successively finding answers through examples to the question, "*What is a good life?*", surely the consideration of exemplary lives should be instructive. My use of selected autobiographies as Poetic resources serves two functions: it demonstrates the coherence and convergence of the autobiographic, Poetic resources with the world view, tenets, and beliefs represented in the eighty two scholarly sources; and, it provides an example of the usefulness of Frye's Poetic framework when applied to real-life resources, thereby emphasizing the suitability of Frye's guide as an instructional tool in teaching ethics to entrepreneurs.

In Chapter Five, I consider the three collections—that is, the eighty-two scholarly sources, Frye's Poetics, and the four autobiographies—as a whole, and I draw together their major ideas, opportunities, and limitations. In addition, I discuss the relationship and relevance of these sources to entrepreneurs and educators; and I evaluate the scope, fruitfulness, simplicity, coherence, and adequacy of Frye's Poetics both a grounding foundation and instructional approach and autobiography as a resource in ethics education for entrepreneurs. In Chapter Six, I synthesize my conclusions and offer recommendations in the context of the research purpose and I reflect on the significance of my dissertation and the importance of Poetics within the broader research settings in entrepreneurship, ethics, education, and the Humanities.

## Chapter 2

### 2 Entrepreneurs, Ethics and Education

In this chapter, I review eighty-two theoretical and empirical sources that I located first through a systematic, key word search of the combined terms, “ethics, education and entrepreneur(ship)”, in the university search engine that integrates several databases, hundreds of journals, and the university’s library catalogue; then, I examined the bibliographies of each of the sources found in the initial search in order to find additional and commonly cited, foundational references. A complete list of my sources is included in Appendix A. The contents of these theoretical and primary sources span a period from 500 B.C. to present day, originate from several countries across the world, and represent various settings and circumstances. The only filter that I applied in my search was English language; all resources found were included despite my initial urge to exclude references that appeared too dissimilar, for example, articles from countries governed by centrally-planned economic systems. Fundamental, important elements were discovered through the inclusion and consideration of all sources located. Unfortunately, I found no Aboriginal sources available despite my expanded attempts to locate even one. The purpose of this section is threefold: first, to locate comprehensive, fundamental tenets about entrepreneurs, their characterization, and their pursuits of freedom through economic change; second, to identify and assess specific ethical or educational perspectives that might be used to theoretically ground the general subject of ethics for entrepreneurs; and third, to isolate the educational aims, resources, and instructional methods currently in use by business school instructors who teach ethics.

#### 2.1 Entrepreneurs

In this section, I present the “ethos” of current literature derived from contemporary scholars’ major beliefs about the nature of entrepreneurs, their ethical dilemmas, and the factors that influence their decision making in ethics as they bring about economic change. I organize the findings into three sections that mirror the full evolutionary cycle

of an entrepreneur: individual with an idea, organization founder, and social and world institutional icon.

## 2.1.1 The Entrepreneur as an Individual with an Idea

### 2.1.1.1 Characterization of the Individual with an Idea

Two characterizations of the entrepreneur appear in the literature: *homo economicus* and poet. *Homo economicus* is a term coined to depict the entrepreneur as an absolutely self-interested individual using instrumental rationality toward technical and financial finality (Sarasvathy, 2002; Machan, 1999). In many ways the notion of *homo economicus* is a conceptual critique of scientism, mechanism, logical positivism, and modernist economic or market explanations of the world; it is the rejection of the human creative ability.

Machan (1999) deems the *homo economicus* to be a narrow, outmoded notion derived from Plato, Descartes, and Kant. Self-interested, instrumentally rational, and exclusively technical and financial views about the world are problematic in defining entrepreneurs, many of whom have a “capacity to see and believe, and imagine things others don’t see or believe in . . . like visions, dreams and passion” (Nandram & Samsom, 2008 p. 2).

Alternatively, entrepreneurs can be characterized as poets or liberal artists because they also create something and present it to the world as their livelihood. Harmeling, Sarasvathy and Freeman (2009) state that,

there is a meaningful role for "the strong poet" in ethics, entrepreneurship . . . the strong poet can be a whistle blower, showing us that the world is not as it appears, that there is more going on under the surface. The strong poet can be an entrepreneur, trying to remake the world in a vision that only she sees at first; her vision expands into value for others as her own version of the good life merges with the public need . . . who offers fresh insights and new "instrumental" narratives . . . [that] serve the dual purpose of reflecting "reality" and allowing us to imagine new and better worlds. (p. 346)

Entrepreneurs share the creative vocation and many of the same purposes and capabilities as poets; both begin by making an observation about the world, then produce a work that

makes a comment about the world, and ultimately offer their creation to others for acceptance or rejection. To distinguish the idea of liberal artist and poet further for the purposes of entrepreneurship, Velamuri (2002) writes,

Indeed, individuals involved in any human activity could be called “poets” or entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship is defined as the process of converting a private idea into a social idea. An economic entrepreneur needs society to validate her idea just as academicians, writers, scientists and artists need their peers and public to validate their ideas. For this reason, the freedom that underpins economic entrepreneurship is no different from the one that inspires poetry . . . . (p. 129)

The poetic nature of the entrepreneur’s work and his or her aim to offer something useful or inspiring to others does not mean that technical competence is not relevant or that earning enough money to live is undesirable. These are important; however, the aesthetic and ethical dimensions of the entrepreneur are necessary to a complete understanding of his or her nature.

Several qualitative and empirical studies have examined the aesthetic and ethical nature of the entrepreneur. Lahdesmaki (2005) found that small business entrepreneurs see themselves as artisans, and consider it a kind of virtue, a part of their craftsmanship, to produce only the best possible products for their customers. Lahdesmaki also reported that entrepreneurs use several ethical stances across a variety of circumstances. Similarly, Robinson, Davidsson, van der Mescht, and Court (2007) and Lahdesmaki (2005) both found that entrepreneurs have a distinctive, unique world view and that they each use many ethical perspectives. Hannafey (2003) concluded that entrepreneurs were highly ethical because of their deep, personal engagement with their activities. Bryant (2009) concluded that entrepreneurs were highly self-regulatory and that their moral awareness was related to their sense of personal integrity and to their independent pursuit of ideal self-states; only sometimes were outside controls and legislation helpful to entrepreneurs in the resolution of moral dilemmas. Despite the belief of many that entrepreneurs need controls such as corporate governance structures and social responsibility programs, Kuratko, Goldsby, and Hornsby (2004), in a study with a sample of 401 entrepreneurs,

found a consistent set of ethical factors for entrepreneurs: entrepreneurs ranked customers as their highest priority stakeholder followed by employees. Lahdesmaki (2005) arrived at the same conclusions. Dawson, Breen, and Satyen (2002) made similar observations and found that entrepreneurial self-interest was a factor in decision making; however, personal motives did not dominate to the exclusion of other considerations.

### 2.1.1.2 Setting and Ethical Dilemmas

The business ethics literature focuses on the mature, large corporation and obscures the reality of the business environment that most people experience (Hicks, 2013). In reality, entrepreneurs are complex moral beings struggling within a complex set of circumstances (Gilbert, 2002); most are not successful and only a small subset advance (Etzioni, 1986, Velamuri, 2002). Indeed many are barely surviving (Cant, 2012). There is no guarantee that one who sets out on an entrepreneurial venture will be a success, and there are no organizational resources or ethical codes to fall back on in the event of failure (Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005). In addition, entrepreneurs face an array of ethical dilemmas relating to promotion, innovation, relationship, financial, and personal challenges.

Dees and Starr (1992) identify a number of promotion dilemmas that have ethical consequences, which include situations in which the entrepreneur's vision of the future is at odds with that of a conservative majority. Progress can be slow because approval from authorities can be difficult, presenting delays which then can cause threats to viability and long term survival. In some instances, in order to attract business, entrepreneurs "use scripts to stage interpersonal encounters which convey an image of certainty and stability that is essential to survival, thus, the vice-president of strategic planning and marketing is a one-man show operating out of his basement" (Dees & Starr, 1992, p. 97). Arend (2015) warns about honesty in both communications and distribution. Hannafey (2003) advises entrepreneurs about the use of judgment and discretion in the "fair disclosure" process which requires transparency regarding the risks of a venture, and warns against the use of influence tactics such as inducement, manipulation, or coercion.

With regard to innovation, entrepreneurs can encounter negative effects not anticipated with a creation. "Frankenstein's problem" arises when technological or engineering

advancements result in unexpected harms to people or the environment (Dees & Starr, 1992). When products are created that have the potential to help many people and populations, issues can arise about who has rights and access to these advancements; debates occur about “finders’ keepers” versus the public good and therefore widespread availability of innovations (Brenkert, 2002).

Entrepreneurs spend a lot of time at work and less time at home which strains relationships and commitments to family and friends (Brenkert, 2002; Cornwall & Naughton, 2003; Nandram & Samsom, 2008). Many conflicts of interest arise because often family, friends, and business colleagues are also financial partners or lenders. Harris and Sapienza (2011) observe that pre-venture loans and post-venture value can cause difficulties as can close relationships with customers and employees (Hannafey, 2003).

Entrepreneurs are often faced with limited financial resources (Harris & Sapienza, 2011). When dealing with new and not yet proven ideas and products, funding can be difficult to obtain from ethical sources. Another factor that challenges the integrity of an entrepreneur is low revenues and shortages in customers, especially if the entrepreneur cannot pay employees and suppliers (Getzler-Linn & Ferrill, 2006). The entrepreneurial context is highly volatile, often an environment where bribery, weak accounting standards, tax evasion, secrecy, corruption, extortion, and business related violence are well known (Hannafey, 2003). Stakeholders to the entrepreneur may break contracts, promises, and customer satisfaction or trust (Bhide & Stevenson, 1990; Bucar & Hisrich, 2001).

Entrepreneurs often experience the universal human feeling of vulnerability and often fear losing their property and resources (Naughton & Cornwall, 2006). Strain occurs when people lack the means to realize their personal goals. In such situations, entrepreneurs may either rationalize unethical conduct or make decisions using judgment clouded by fear and anxiety. Fassin (2005) reports that some entrepreneurs are unethical in the early part of their careers until they make enough money to *afford* to be ethical; their actions and decisions often haunt them and affect their happiness. Brenkert (2009)

describes the phenomenon of “dirty hands”, a situation in which an entrepreneur must choose among options which all have unfavorable implications ethically.

Entrepreneurs have a powerful bias for action, operate in isolated, stressful business environments, and often struggle to find time and perspective for focused, ethical reflection; thus, they often cannot adequately consider ethical consequences (Hannafey, 2003). They make decisions in isolation and take actions that affect many persons, often without the moral guidance available in established organizations (Hannafey, 2003). Great optimism and enthusiasm may limit an entrepreneur’s ability to recognize or make critical judgments about potential ethical problems (Hannafey, 2003). Conversely, entrepreneurs can over-trust, becoming more vulnerable to others’ opportunism (Harris & Sapienza, 2011).

### 2.1.1.3 Support in Ethical Decision Making

In order to maintain personal integrity and to make thoughtful decisions, entrepreneurs often rely on family and friends (Brown, 2002, Carr, 2003, Crane, 2009), teachers and mentors (Crane, 2009), and customers (Cheung & Yeo-chi King, 2004). In addition, entrepreneurs obtain guidance from spiritual or religious beliefs (Anderson, 2014, Barabee, 2005, Blockson, 2012, Brown, 2002, Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005, p. 309, Carr, 2003), education (Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005), and their own personal standards. Bhidé and Stevenson (1990) concluded that honesty is a moral choice; entrepreneurs choose virtue and choose to believe in themselves so that others, too, will believe in and respect them; entrepreneurs are honest because they want to be, not because they have to be.

## 2.1.2 The Entrepreneur as Organization Founder

### 2.1.2.1 Characterization of the Organization Founder

Several reasons have been provided for the generally ethical nature of entrepreneurs who found organizations. They are primary decision-makers and so will assume greater responsibility (Crane, 2009). As well, entrepreneurs secure their ventures and organizations with personal loans and other investments so have a higher property/equity ratio involved and higher personal risks (Bucar & Hisrich, 2001; Carland, Hoy, Boulton & Carland, 1984; Getzler-Linn & Ferrill, 2006). Entrepreneurs are visible to

stakeholders and cannot hide from unethical conduct (Longnecker & McKinney, 1988). Furthermore, entrepreneurs work autonomously and can exercise choice in their customers, employees, and suppliers (Gilbert, 2002); besides, unethical behavior in their own company would present an internal contradiction (Bucar et al., 2003). Lastly, one of the findings of Robinson, van der Mescht, and Lancaster's (2003) study was that for entrepreneurs, honesty in business is a necessary condition for their self-esteem (p. 127).

Researchers have overwhelmingly found across several countries that entrepreneurs are generally more ethical than corporate managers; studies were conducted in the United States (Longnecker & McKinney 1988, 1989; Teal & Carroll, 1999), in Canada (Crane, 2009), and internationally in the United States, Russia, and Slovenia (Bucar, Glas & Hisrich, 2003). One study determined that entrepreneurs were generally more ethical than MBA students (McVea, 2009).

#### 2.1.2.2 Setting and Ethical Dilemmas

Ethical issues arise “not only in ‘big business’ and in the form of major scandals, but also in the form of every day decision making among small scale entrepreneurs” (Robinson et al., 2007, p. 411). Some areas that present ethical challenges are general administration and employee relations, firm size and growing pains, interaction with large corporations, and difficulties with shareholders.

Entrepreneurs are successful in their own pursuits; however, when the time comes to establish a firm of their own, they are often new and unfamiliar with organization and management best practices, principles, and functions (Hannafey, 2003). Entrepreneurs have difficulty in finding ways to “transition the firm’s ethical reference point from the entrepreneur’s values and judgment to a professional management team and culture where the norms and values become institutionalized” (Morris, Schindehutte, Walton, & Allen, 2002). Several studies have shown that the pressures of organizational objectives can make individuals do things that prevent them from being proud of their work (Cornwall & Naughton, 2003); and “moral muteness” makes managers decide to keep quiet and not speak out in situations they disagree with at work (Hemmingway, 2004, in Fassin, 2005). In an international study in the United States, Russia, and Slovenia,



researchers found that individuals generally felt that personal integrity should not be sacrificed to the goals of business; however, managers felt they did indeed have to compromise their values (Bucar et al., 2003). In a study conducted in South Africa, employees of entrepreneurial firms reported that they are aware of proper, ethical attitudes, but have to compromise these for basic survival (Cant, 2012). The high standards and reputation for honesty that brought about the entrepreneur's success may not be observed in his or her own organization. Among other personnel dilemmas is that key people quit---which can lead to the temptation to retreat from the grander vision (Naughton & Cornwall, 2006).

When the firm is new, limited cash and, often, demands from niche customers fluctuate, creating a significant amount of pressure (Morris et al., 2002). Disputes are another liability to newness; the trust of suppliers, competitors, or other stakeholders may appear to be breached, but there can be so much ambiguity that even the aggrieved parties cannot comprehend what happened (Bhide & Stevenson, 1990). Robinson et al. (2007) found that entrepreneurs demonstrate concern for commitment to service and contributing to a quality of life; and, that entrepreneurial dilemmas were comprised mainly of conflicting responsibilities, authenticity, credibility, risk, expansion, and awareness of diversity. In addition, as the organization grows, the entrepreneur can feel himself or herself disappearing and can begin to lose a sense of identity to the firm he or she created (Cornwall & Naughton, 2003). Neubaum, Mitchell, and Schminke (2004), in a large scale empirical study, found that as firms grew their ethic levels declined, whereas in new and smaller firms profits were secondary to caring and survival. Payne and Joyner (2006) found similar results and they too observed that entrepreneurs in smaller firms were more ethical and focused on customers and employees as their most important stakeholders.

Dawson et al. (2002) revealed that entrepreneurs are worried about "disparities of power and issues of general fairness between businesses of different sizes that might lead to significant, harsh, and unjust conditions being imposed by big businesses on small ones" (p. 310). Once an entrepreneur grows his or her firm to a certain point, "the entrepreneur cannot voluntarily split up the company or change customers on their own, and they must comply with many levels of management, government and boards of directors" (Gilbert,

2002, p. 118). Once an entrepreneur's company grows into a hierarchical organization, they "have a fiduciary duty to act on behalf of their owners; to do otherwise is immoral" (Miles, Munilla & Covin, 2004, p. 98).

### 2.1.2.3 Support in Ethical Decision Making

Choi and Gray (2008) observed that entrepreneurs always have the option to remain autonomous and independent; they concluded that socially responsible entrepreneurs maintain ownership of their companies and resist selling their firms to large, multi-national companies, and they resist becoming publically traded. Many socially responsible entrepreneurs do not sell their firms to larger companies because the entrepreneurs feel their values would not prevail (Choi & Gray, 2008). In addition, socially responsible entrepreneurs have often secured financing from "angel investors", funders with similar values (Choi & Gray, 2008).

Some scholars have either devised or demonstrated frameworks that can assist entrepreneurs in their ethical decision making. For example, Solymossy and Masters (2002) created a framework to isolate determinants of ethical behavior in organizations, and Robinson et al. (2007) demonstrated the usefulness of the Business Ethics Synergy Star technique.

## 2.1.3 The Entrepreneur as Institution in Society and the World

### 2.1.3.1 Characterization as Institution in Society and the World

Baumol (1993) surveyed historical evidence from ancient Rome, early China, and the Middle Ages and Renaissance in Europe to investigate what factors influenced the prevalence or reduction of entrepreneurship. He observed that entrepreneurs emerged to increase quality of life and to replace dated or unfair economic or value systems. He considers approval and funding for inventions and cites Finley (1985) who states,

we must remind ourselves time and again that in the European experience since the late Middle Ages in technology, in the economy, and in the value systems that accompanied them, [entrepreneurship] was unique in human history . . . .

Technical progress, economic growth, productivity, even efficiency have not been

significant goals since the beginning of time. So long as an acceptable life-style could be maintained, however that was defined, other values held the stage.

(Finley, 1985 in Baumol, 1993, p. 901)

Entrepreneurship as a moral and respective economic institution is a relatively new experience that emerged because of shortcomings in systems where property and wealth were centrally controlled by various forms of governments. Entrepreneurship's first principles were moral; how wealth is created and distributed is not only an economic reality, but at its heart involves virtue and vice (Naughton & Cornwall, 2006 p. 71). Carr (2003) asserts that not just a historical review but also an ideological review will profoundly reveal how ethics and enterprise are inextricably connected.

Three highly cited, foundational theorists have written about the nature of entrepreneurship as a social or global institution: Adam Smith in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) and *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (1776), Joseph Schumpeter in *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942), and David McLelland in *The Achieving Society* (1961). Scholars who cite these works share similar perspectives to those who have considered the nature of the individual entrepreneur. They concur that an over-emphasis on instrumental rationality and economic and technical finality are conceptual confusions and are foundationally inconsistent with the intentions that first characterized capitalism and now entrepreneurship. Several scholars attempt to issue a correction to the widespread departures from Adam Smith's ideology for capitalism (Newbert, 2003; Anderson & Smith, 2007). For example, Anderson and Smith (2007) state,

The classical political economy portrayed by Adam Smith during the Enlightenment was judged to be morally constituted; that economic activities were embedded in non-economic social relations and shaped by moral values other than instrumental rationality. However, in modernity, notions of the economy developed as an autonomous sphere with its own internal logic, including a break between economic rationality and moral purpose. Furthermore, in neo-liberalistic versions of the free market values of individualism, the

concretization of free market logic is said to have undermined the social and ethical values of society. Moreover, in the wave of post-modernist thinking, moral relativism eschews any notion of normative judgements about what is to be deemed right or deemed wrong. (p. 479)

Newbert (2003) has similar concerns that modern economic theory has become “tightly focused on the pursuit of economic self-interests at the expense of other, higher order motives” (p. 251). Carr (2003) says that capitalism is the new, bourgeois institution based on rational action, and that it “has gone adrift from foundations in Enlightenment when it was focused on mankind” (p. 13) and “the development of an ethical lifestyle, social ties and how one lives one’s life” (p. 14).

Others have no interest in resurrecting, retrofitting, or correcting Adam Smith’s ideas; instead, they focus on Joseph Schumpeter’s (1942) recent theories (Hicks, 2009, Harmeling et al., 2009, Velamuri, 2002). Harmeling et al. (2009) refer to Schumpeter as a foundational thinker in the field of entrepreneurship who pointed out a long time ago that

the entrepreneur’s role in society, much like the artist’s, is to ‘creatively destroy’ by combining previously unconnected elements to create new products, services, channels of distribution and technologies. And, in the creative process, the line between ‘business’ and ‘ethics’ truly disappears. (p. 347)

Others (Dees & Starr, 1992; Hannafey, 2003) focus on McLelland’s call for the study of entrepreneurship as a completely distinct discipline; McLelland asserts, “We do not know at the present time what makes an entrepreneur more or less ethical in his [or her] dealings but obviously there are few problems of greater importance for future research” (McLelland, 1961, in Hannafey, 2003, p. 99).

Scholars who study and write about the nature of entrepreneurs as institutions in society and in the world focus on a number of themes: the inherent virtues of autonomy, freedom, and ownership; duties in the quality of life not only for the entrepreneur but also others; and, the role of the entrepreneur as not only economic change agent but also as moral agent directly responsible for overall human welfare in both society and the world.

Entrepreneurship is an important human activity that must be situated in its context, the reasons why we work: “financial security, creative expression, sociability and even adventure” (Hicks, 2013, p. 1240). Decentralization of the economy involves ethical dimensions (Brenkert, 2002) and entrepreneurship is founded on “socio-economic views on self-determination, freedom, wealth disparity and distributive justice” (Harris & Sapienza, 2011, p. 16) which are ethical concepts (Gilbert, 2002); and at its heart it establishes creative freedom (Sarasvathy, 2002). Some entrepreneurship, for example Fair Trade produce, has inherent ethical value (Wempe, 2005). Overall, entrepreneurship is directed at public purposes (de Leon, 1996) because members of society have to accept and purchase goods.

Entrepreneurial innovations create millions of new jobs (Brenkert, 2002; Hannafey, 2003; Brown, 2002; Diaz-Casero, Diaz-Aunion, Sanchez-Escobedo, Coduras & Hernandez-Mogollon, 2012). Entrepreneurial economies reach national levels of prosperity that provide greater overall access to education, food supplies, and higher quality health care, and reduction in illiteracy and longer life expectancy (Diaz-Casero et al., 2012). New products and services make fundamental changes in people’s lives (McVea, 2009; Velamuri, 2002), as well as in global, economic life (Hannafey, 2003). Dahle (2007) states, “Microsoft tweaks software and rearranges the virtual desktops of millions of people shaping how they work every day; Walmart makes organic produce available to those whose incomes once limited them to preservative-laden, processed food” (p. 68). Robinson et al. (2003) found that,

the true character of an entrepreneur is to know that he’s making a valuable contribution to the society in which he lives. He believes that someone who is interested only in improving his own quality of life becomes caught up in the rat race, bitter and twisted, and ultimately crushed. A participating entrepreneur, who is in the health-care business, gains her satisfaction from observing her clients undergo life-changing experiences. To her, that result, rather than material gain, is the real payoff. She believes that entrepreneurs should consider their motives; if they are purely material gain, then, she says, they are actually wasting their time. “What’s the point?” she asks. One of the participants started his community

school as a result of a conscious decision to empower people through education.  
(p. 122)

Sarasvathy (2002) notes that, “It is the task of entrepreneurship to partially discover and fully forge and implement through economic means the vision of a future composed of the diverse aspirations of millions of people” (p. 110).

Entrepreneurs force social reconsiderations of norms and values (Dees & Starr, 1992; Venkataraman, 2002); and entrepreneurial activity is indeed recreating government in China (Brown, 2002). Newbert (2003) shows how entrepreneurs challenge and supplant existing firms, thereby redistributing the social wealth (p. 257); he cites Kirchhoff’s (1989) study of five hundred of the largest publically traded United States firms for each year from 1961 to 1980, which found large firms were displaced systematically and by newer firms. Newbert (2003) also cites Norton’s (1992) comparable study that found similar results suggesting that a continual redistribution of wealth does in fact occur.

Entrepreneurs are change agents. The moral space of entrepreneurship is important in creating new organizations and new businesses, and in revitalizing the old ones (Anderson & Smith, 2007). Entrepreneurs can even elevate the ethical tone in society (Crane, 2009; Hartman, Wilson & Arnold, 2005). Often, entrepreneurs function outside conventional and customary rules (Brenkert, 2009; Solymossy & Masters, 2002; Teal & Carroll, 1999). Muhammad Yunus, for example, found that very small loans would make a significant difference to those living in poverty, so he created the Grameen Bank through which he provided loans to Bangladeshi women. Initially, Yunus was threatened with charges of radical activity but was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in 1996 for attempting to create economic and social development from below (Blockson, 2012, Culkin, 2010).

Recent history has indicated that market economies tend to produce more goods and services and generate a much higher level of public welfare than command economies (Miles et al., 2004). Data from the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor from 2002 to 2009 as well as statistics found in the Index of Economic Freedom from 1995 to 2009 demonstrate that economic freedom is closely related to entrepreneurial activity (Diaz-

Casero et al., 2012). A South African study concluded entrepreneurs play a vital role in economies worldwide, alleviate poverty, and help with social mobility (Cant, 2012). Harris and Sapienza (2011) found that local, ethnic minority entrepreneurship was helpful in alleviating third world poverty. Brown (2002) shares such views and states that “China’s encouragement of entrepreneurial ventures outside the ‘planned economy’ seems to have been wildly successful over the past twenty years, certainly when compared to the dire economic conditions spawned by the forced collectivization during Mao’s ‘cultural revolution’ of the 1960’s and 1970’s” (p. 225). However, Brown (2002) cautions, “What of the Western economic model when other institutions like the law and minimum wage and requirements for safe working conditions also were forced upon entrepreneurs; these do not exist yet in China” (Brown, 2002, p. 228). In a more general context outside China, Newbert (2003) comments that while the majority may be better off than in any other system of economic organization, “the existence of the inequality itself is detrimental to a democracy that assumes an equal distribution of power among the polity” (p. 254). Stuart (2014) states that, “As effective as the civil rights movement has been, the important issue [today] to African Americans is economics” (p. 9). Harris and Sapienza (2011) also admit that there are problems with the entrepreneurial cycle and action should be taken to ensure there that there is positive political change and a virtuous cycle to replace dated institutions.

### 2.1.3.2 Setting and Ethical Dilemmas

Entrepreneurship as an institution devoted to economic and political freedom faces many challenges and tenuous situations, such as media sensationalism; unfairness or corruption in government, financial and legal systems; and pressures arising from interactions with multi-national companies.

The media, including business magazines, news outlets, soap operas, and television programs, often portray entrepreneurs in extremes: highly ethical and successful, or highly ambitious, cunning, and relentless. One of the reasons “that broad cross sections of society are suspicious of the entrepreneur, is that they identify the entrepreneur with a one-in-a-million success story” (Velamuri, 2002, p. 137). Stories about successful business founders like Bill Gates, Steve Jobs, Ted Turner, Mrs. Fields, and others fill the

popular press, promoting the myth of the romantic and heroic individual (Drakopoulou, Dood, & Anderson, 2007). These and similar beliefs are unfounded because entrepreneurs are actually surrounded by many others who help them (Chell, 2000; Drakopoulou, Dodd, & Anderson, 2007). Fassin (2005) observed that not only business leaders but also their financial journalist friends are part of the notion of the entrepreneur as a celebrity making “easy money”.

Gilbert (2002) states that the general public often wonders, “Where will it all end?” An article in *Business Week* depicted genomics as a “gold rush”, reporting 250 million dollars already spent, and hypothesizing genomics would provide the power to “own the code of life” (Gilbert, 2002). Gilbert (2002) says, “Capitalism is a process without a destination” (p. 114). The media provide a market, financial rewards, and prestige for criminal behavior. Anderson and Smith (2007) interviewed a notorious gangster who now has “gotten on the straight and narrow”; however, he now has commodified his criminality by writing books and making films and accepting “guest appearances”. While the gangster’s crimes were not explicitly supported, his movies and books were. Fassin (2005) cites Eco (2000): “Role models of the past – heroes, saints and sages – people whose morality stood above the rest of mankind--have been replaced with mediocre personages of soaps and reality shows with low moralities” (Eco, 2000, in Fassin, 2005, p. 273). Since the days of classical Greece, entrepreneurs have been praised for their important contributions to economic life. Yet many have also been strongly criticized for significant ethical lapses. In the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* (c. 520 B.C.), the mythical entrepreneur Hermes –depicted as a skilled innovator and merchant—is dishonest, and is described as an ‘unethical trickster and thief’ (Hannafey, 2003, p. 99). The myth persists that the entrepreneur is a clever strategist obsessed with profit maximization in a zero sum social game (Velamuri, 2002, p. 138), and a trickster (Brenkert, 2009). Some entrepreneurs are strictly self and profit oriented; however, Neubaum et al. (2004) found that

The popular business press has often characterized entrepreneurs and the firms they lead as aggressive, cutthroat competitors motivated by maximizing financial gains at all costs. Some have suggested that such proactive, innovative,



entrepreneurial strategies lead firms to pursue a ‘win at all costs’ attitude and push them to totally disregard ethical concerns. We hypothesized that such a strategic posture ought to be reflected in the ethical climates of entrepreneurial firms.

However, our results do not support that position. (p. 343)

Machan (1999) does not blame the individual entrepreneur or the institution of entrepreneurship; instead he offers that “if the entrepreneur is a rascal or a rogue then the system that gives such a person a home is surely tainted” (p 596.). Harris and Sapienza (2011) also find that entrepreneurial troubles are essentially a breakdown of institutional ethics.

Anokhin and Schulze (2009) conducted a large scale, empirical study that obtained data from multiple, independent sources across a seven year period (1996-2002) and that included sixty-four different countries. Their aim was to investigate entrepreneurship and innovation, unfair law enforcement, corruption, and profit-driven activities associated with government officials or their representatives. They found that policy-makers need to control corruption and that corrupt national activity attracts other corrupt nations, frustrating domestic innovation activity, economic development, jobs, and the gross national product.

Richard Arend, in *Wicked Entrepreneurship* (2015), describes a wide range of unfavorable aspects of both entrepreneurs and the institutions within which they operate. In *Enterprising Litigation and Entrepreneurs Enmeshed in the Law* (1984), McCormick talks about the pervasive, strategic use of regulation. Baumol (1993) cites a passage from McCormick’s book:

There is a lot of wealth at stake there, and managers would be remiss in their fiduciary responsibilities if they ignored profits available through (legal) manipulation of governmental processes. The decision to invest resources in lobbying to prevent the entry of rivals, to form a regulatory cartel, or to impose costs on existing rivals does not differ materially from all the other decisions that managers make on a daily basis. (McCormick, 1984, in Baumol, 1993, p. 73)

The financial sector is another arena where temptation is prevalent. *No One Would Listen: A True Financial Thriller* by Harry Markopolis (2010), a financial analyst, recounts how he tried to report a high profile Wall Street stock broker to regulatory agencies; however, his warnings went unheeded until the broker's arrest only after he had already defrauded others of billions of dollars.

Fadahunsi & Rosa (2002) engaged in an eight month ethnographic study in Nigeria; illegality and cross-border trading were so widespread, they were the norm. Bribery was just part of a system of harassment by officials and law enforcement; it persists because it has created hundreds of jobs illegally is so institutionalized is difficult to remove. Sommer, Welsh, and Gubman (2000) state that the illegal trade associated with "the 'second economy' in Russia had been tolerated because it was needed to supplement the inadequate production of goods and services by the state in the centrally planned economy" (p. 689).

Cheung and Yeo-chi King (2004) performed in-depth interviews with a number of entrepreneurs in China. They discovered difficulties with government and enforcement agency extortion. Even when legal rulings were fairly made, the enforcement of justice was difficult. In one entrepreneur's case,

His business partner owed him several million yuan and refused to pay him back. He took the case to court which ruled in his favor. But the defendant ignored the ruling. He then applied for coercive implementation . . . as a result, the judge in charge of this case not only failed to help him get the money back, but tried to persuade him to accept instead a certain amount of not so valuable goods from the defendant. (Cheung & Yeo-chi King, 2004, p. 256)

Unfair treatment and corruption in government, legal systems, and financial institutions is a very difficult reality in many countries.

Entrepreneurs struggle to survive in an environment of widespread abuse of power from large, often multi-national companies which set general trade and business standards; questionable norms erode ethical practices, leaving entrepreneurs in a position in which

they do not even realize their behavior is unethical (Fassin, 2005). Cant (2012) found that small businesses follow the lead of larger organizations and that bribery, exploitation, violations of human rights, sexual harassment, and theft become issues in small businesses, too. Bhide and Stevenson (1990) concluded that power replaces trust; big suppliers are abusive, but are very large clients, so poor behavior and unrealistic demands have to be tolerated; he cites one entrepreneur who stated that attacking a more powerful transgressor is foolhardy and retaliation a wasteful distraction. Some smaller firms succumb to such pressures. Corporate take-overs have a depressing effect on profit, or their imitations of original ideas impede competition and new-comers (Baumol, 1993, p. 73). However, large companies have many government connections and they influence the law. Bucar et al (2003) warn of the unfavorable consequences of policy and regulations that limit new, small, or entrepreneurial; indeed, innovators introduce choices into markets and raise ethical standards overall.

#### 2.1.3.3 Influences on Ethical Decision-Making

Societies with high levels of business ethics tend to be characterized by greater certainty of actions and lower costs of regulation and policing (Bucar et al., 2003, p. 261).

However,

economic systems, as important as they are, do not have the resources, nor do they possess the criteria, to [unilaterally] provide a meaningful human life or to create the moral and spiritual conditions necessary for people to develop. Virtues will ultimately come from the culture in which entrepreneurs operate. (Naughton & Cornwall, 2006, p. 88)

Entrepreneurs as social and world entities do not operate outside other institutions such as family, religion, and education that can assist in ethical decision making. Ethics through education is preferable to governmental action to correct market failures (Velamuri, 2002, p. 140).

### 2.1.4 Summary of Entrepreneurs

In this section, I described and organized the major tenets regarding the nature of entrepreneurs: they are generally earnest in their pursuits of their and others' interests although many temptations and dilemmas arise individually, in organizations, in society, and in the world. Qualitative and empirical studies have demonstrated that, across the entrepreneurial life-cycle, entrepreneurs rely on their own integrity, unique world view, and the freedom to choose among various ethical approaches to achieve their outcomes. In addition, they rely on family, friends, religion, scholarly frameworks, and education to inform their ethical decision making.

## 2.2 Ethical Perspectives in Education for Entrepreneurs

In this section, I describe four major ethical perspectives that appear in the literature used to theoretically orient, explain, and teach about the entrepreneur's ethical pursuit of freedom through economic change: virtue ethics, deontology, utilitarianism, and moral ecology. I characterize each view as either universal or relative in nature, cite the major sources of each perspective, and I address the arguments in favour of or against each ethical perspective in teaching entrepreneurs ethics.

### 2.2.1 Virtue Ethics: Universal Qualities Required for Happiness

Virtue ethics maintains an optimistic, charitable view of human nature, trusting in the basic good of individuals and their ability to govern themselves with integrity, forming just societies. Virtue ethics focuses on universal, inherent personal disposition rather than the relative moral worth of particular intentions or outcomes. In virtue ethics, a good person exemplifies certain character traits (Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005; Cornwall & Naughton, 2003) and demonstrates virtue by *being* good, not just knowing virtue for its own sake (Culkin, 2010, Lahdesmaki, 2005). Virtue ethics must only be examined or evaluated within the overall, broad context of life (Lahdesmaki, 2005). Virtues are the universal, important means to the end of flourishing and happiness (Hicks, 2013; Williams, 1997).

The most cited source for virtue ethics is Aristotle (Anderson, 2014; Benson, 1997; Blockson, 2012; Bucar & Hisrich, 2001; Carr, 2003; Cornwall & Naughton, 2003; Culkin, 2010; Hartman, 2008; Hicks, 2009; Machan, 1999; Miller & Collier, 2010; Miller, 2011; Robinson et al., 2003). The second most prevalent source of virtue ethics is scholarly theorists such as Ayn Rand's (1964) *The Objectivist Ethics* (Hicks, 2009; Machan, 1999), Rosalind Hursthouse's (1999) *On Virtue Ethics* (Brenkert, 2009), and Alasdair MacIntyre's (1981) *After Virtue* (Cornwall & Naughton, 2003). The third most commonly cited source of the virtue-oriented perspective are religions such as Christianity (Benson, 1997; Wempe, 2005; Carr, 2003; Cornwall & Naughton, 2003; Naughton & Cornwall, 2006) and Confucianism (Brown, 2002; Cheung & Yeo-chi King, 2004). Regardless of the world view used to frame virtue ethics, some virtues are common and mentioned on several instances, including:

Courage (Miller & Collier, 2010; Naughton & Cornwall, 2006)

Prudence (Machan, 1999; Miller, 2010)

Justice (Miller & Collier, 2010; Hicks, 2013)

Self-confidence (Barbee, 2005)

Honesty (Bhide & Stevenson, 1990)

Industriousness (Cornwall & Naughton, 2003)

Pride (Hicks, 2013)

Integrity (Hicks, 2013)

Objectivity, (Hicks, 2013)

Independence, (Hicks, 2013)

Productiveness, (Hicks, 2013)

Temperance (Miller & Collier, 2010)

### 2.2.1.1 Arguments In Favour of Virtue Ethics

The tenets of virtue ethics are consistent with many of the empirical studies confirming that the entrepreneur is inherently ethical, is trying his or her best, and is capable of self-regulation (Bryant, 2009; Lahdesmaki, 2005). Clarke and Aram (1997) found that universal values do indeed manifest across nations. Those who support virtue ethics theory do so because of its relevance and usefulness primarily in the uncharted and often chaotic setting in which the entrepreneur operates. Virtues are universal, objective, unchangeable and non-contextualized, providing entrepreneurs with broad guidelines (Carr, 2003; Brenkert, 2009). Buchholz & Rosenthal (2005) state, “[virtue] ethics stems from an inward commitment to live a virtuous life rather than a commitment to implement a set or of rules or principles” (p. 308), rendering strict social norms and law enforcement unnecessary for the majority of entrepreneurs. Naughton & Cornwall (2006) write, “When an entrepreneur sees his work in the light of virtue . . . he is not using some foreign ideology to cloud his judgement . . . but rather is able to see more profoundly what he is actually doing as an entrepreneur as understood within the larger meaning of his humanity” (p. 88).

### 2.2.1.2 Limits of Virtue Ethics

One of the greatest difficulties with virtue ethics is agreement about which virtues are most important and what to do if they conflict. From the list above, many virtues are excluded, such as patience and respect. The virtues of courage and prudence on the list may conflict depending on the circumstances; in such cases, entrepreneurs are left with unanswered questions. Brenkert (2002) offers that a complete ethical perspective must incorporate both virtue and vice because people engage in entrepreneurship for good and bad purposes. Lahdesmaki (2005) points out that “one essential problem concerning virtue ethics is that a psychological characteristic cannot be a basis of ethics, per se. For example, whereas courage can be a moral virtue, a courageous person can be also a criminal” (p. 58-59). Machan (1999) states that “a good human life involves the integration of all the virtues, a balance among them, so that one is not, for example, generous to a fault” (p. 604). Brenkert (2002) cautions against allowing individuals to

solve the problems of society; instead he advocated a principled approach to address issues.

## 2.2.2 Deontology: Universal Duty to Act for Others' Benefit

Deontology places primary importance on social obligations, contending that people need universal principles in order to act with duty and goodwill toward others. Robinson et al. (2003) proffer the notion that not all people are virtuous and so virtue ethics cannot guarantee morally acceptable behavior, necessitating a more prescriptive form of normative ethics referred to as rule-based ethics.

Deontology is not unlike virtue ethics, in the sense that, as a moral theory, its goal is for everyone to act virtuously at all times. The difference is that it seeks to prescribe moral duties by promoting an imperative to act morally, on the assumption that people will not, of themselves, always act in virtuous ways. (Robinson et al., 2003, p. 117)

Deontology purely focuses on the intrinsic rightness of an action without regard for consequences of the action; for example, a person must tell the truth, even if it brings harm to himself or herself. Deontology upholds that social contracts, obligations to others, and good will are universal law; as such, primary emphasis is placed on self-disinterested, reasoned actions. In deontology, the most important factor is *intention*. If an individual acts with good intentions toward others and with best efforts to comply with universal principles of obligation, then any unfavourable outcomes can be overlooked. The most cited sources of deontology's duty-based ethics are Emanuel Kant's (1785) *Groundwork on the Metaphysics of Morals* (Bucar et al., 2003, Getzler-Linn & Ferrill, 2006) and John Rawls' (1971) *A Theory of Justice* (Payne & Joyner, 2006, Velamuri, 2002).

### 2.2.2.1 Arguments In Favour of Deontology

Deontology is consistent with empirical studies that conclude entrepreneurs are primarily interested in their customers and employees (Kuratko et al., 2004; Dawson et al., 2002). Fisscher, Frenkel, Lurie and Nijhof (2005) support deontology because entrepreneurs are

in a state of constant flux, so it is helpful to have guiding norms. Bucar et al. (2003) and Getzler-Linn and Ferrill (2006) maintain that social contract theory can ensure favourable outcomes in economic transactions.

#### 2.2.2.2 Limits of Deontology

Cheung and Yeo chi King (2004) and Brenkert (2009) argue that putting moral precepts into practice is difficult when social institutions either do not or no longer rely on them. Ackhoff (1987) and Brenkert (2009) state that the difficulty with rules of conduct is that the institutions that create them generally equate ethical-moral behaviour with conformity to *their* authority; such a position is problematic in a pluralistic society (Kuratko et al., 2004). Williams (1997) offers that social contract theories outlining obligations need a context, a vision of what constitutes a good life; a broad, worldly vision is lacking in arguments for deontology.

Crane (2009) states that entrepreneurs generally function outside organizational and social norms, without standard codes of ethics. Brenkert (2009) advises that rules are too specific and directive; as with virtue ethics, principles counter and conflict with each other and do not provide insight about what to do in ambiguous situations. Another limit of deontology is that it leaves little room for passion, creativity, innovation, and boldness (Crane, 2009); business innovation and newness means unanticipated, unprecedented rules or principles (Culkin, 2010, Hannafey, 2003, Harris & Sapienza, 2011).

Even though ethics in the deontology perspective is thought to be universal, Bucar and Hisrich (2001) write, “Sufficient evidence exists indicating that at least some aspects are embedded within the socio-economic-political system, resulting in differing interpretations of what constitutes ethically appropriate actions” (p. 79). Machan (1999) argues, “By the Kantian and many neo-Kantian ethical viewpoints, entrepreneurship cannot be morally praiseworthy, since there is no way that the entrepreneur could be seen as acting disinterestedly, without concern for his or her goals of, in particular, economic profit” (p. 606). Cant (2012) reports that entrepreneurs know rules and ethical attitudes but compromise them for base survival. Absolute reliance on rules and duty, without regard for the setting, pressures, and resultant outcomes of actions is itself irrational.



Entrepreneurs do act in their own interest, consequences do matter, and entrepreneurs do consider rewards and punishments associated with their actions.

### 2.2.3 Utilitarianism: Relative Greatest Good of Actions

Entrepreneurs do not always act with independent virtue or with reasoned, selfless goodwill toward others. The utilitarian stance on ethics introduces a contextualized perspective, placing emphasis on the relative degree of utility, rightness, or wrongness of an act. Utilitarianism holds that individuals are rational agents, make decisions, and act according to what they deem most useful for themselves *and* others. Lahdesmaki (2005) explains that, in utilitarian ethics, any act is morally acceptable if it produces the greatest net benefits or the lowest net costs for society as a whole. Utilitarianism differs from the notion of universal virtues and duties; it upholds that ethics are relative and contextual, and that only consequences or outcomes, not virtue or intentions, can be deemed ethical or unethical depending on how many benefits can be observed. In utilitarianism, if an entrepreneur has good intentions but harms many others then the outcome is unethical; and likewise, if an entrepreneur does not follow the rules but achieves a generally good outcome, then the action is acceptable. The most cited, foundational sources of the utilitarian ethical perspective is Jeremy Bentham's (1789) *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation* and John Stuart Mill's (1861) *Utilitarianism* (Lahdesmak, 2005).

#### 2.2.3.1 Arguments In Favour of Utilitarianism

The utilitarian approach to ethics is consistent with Van de Ven, Sapienza, and Villaneuva's (2008) empirical study in which they concluded that individual and collective aims are not mutually exclusive, rather they inherently converge in most entrepreneurial cases. Surie and Ashley (2008) proffer the notion that utilitarianism reinforces an individual's free will and ability to choose, which is essential in entrepreneurship. Brown (2002) maintains that entrepreneurship is inherently utilitarian because it promotes conditions that make most people better off than they would be under economic systems and because most entrepreneurial economies do indeed deliver greater overall goods than other centrally-planned economic models.

### 2.2.3.2 Limits of Utilitarianism

Bhide and Stevenson (1990) and DeClercq and Dakhli (2009) warn that, in utilitarianism, “moral frailty” is condoned in the name of progress and allows for the rationalization of wrongs. Brenkert (2009) and Kuratko et al. (2004) caution that utilitarianism promotes widespread non-compliance with *any* norms that an entrepreneur may believe to be out-of-date, too limited, narrow, ossified, of questionable relevance, or simply standing in the way of a valuable project. Brenkert (2009) points out that an emphasis on individual actions does not reveal the cumulative results of many indiscretions. Lahdesmaki (2005), Hartman (2008), and Newbert (2003) note that utilitarian theories are themselves dated, are indicative of narrow, neo-classical economic theory, and have been widely criticised due to the difficulties in actually measuring and therefore justifying the utilities of an act.

Cornwall and Naughton (2003) and Harmeling et al. (2009) express their concern that an emphasis on outward actions and behaviours does not allow for deep, personal, and spirited reflection that informs decisions and character. Hartman (2008) concludes that, ultimately, utilitarianism relies on the antecedents of virtues and rules because virtues explain why we justify actions, and entrepreneurs need to know principles in order to engage the moral reasoning that determines “greatest good”. Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) also relate virtues to utilitarianism because virtues constitute standards for rational justification. Hartman et al. (2005) argue that utilitarianism naively assumes homogenous nations, states, or organizations.

### 2.2.4 Moral Ecology: Relative and Creative Agreement

Virtue ethics and deontology promote an objective, universal stance on ethics; utilitarianism presents a more relative, situational view. Rossouw (2002) discusses dilemmas that arise from the universal-relative dichotomies emerging from the three ethical perspectives:

Moral objectivism [universalism] claims that there can be agreement on what is moral, i.e., there exists a moral truth that can be discovered by everyone in an objective way, and everyone should therefore live by the same morality. In direct opposition to moral objectivism, ethical relativism claims that there can be no

definite or objective moral truth. With the advent of a ‘global village’ and the resultant exposure to different cultures, people are now realizing that cultural diversity is a significant factor that influences the appropriateness of any moral theory – what is right in one culture is not necessarily right in someone else’s. (Rossouw 2002 in Robinson et al., 2003, p. 117)

As an alternative, moral ecology, a more recent extension of pragmatism, aims to reconcile theoretical difficulties; it upholds the notion that ethics are contingent, contextual, and relative but that ethics evolve toward the highest possible level of widespread agreement through a continual process of introduction, testing, and refinement similar to natural selection in Biology. Entrepreneurs do present new ideas and ethical perspectives; however, their contributions are vetted through and sanctioned by a social legitimation process. Moral ecology is relativist in that societies establish ethical norms, but universal in that there is a constant striving to the highest ethical end, survival. The most cited theorists and works in moral ecology are Richard Rorty’s (1989) *Contingency, Irony & Solidarity* (Harmeling et al., 2009; Velamuri, 2002); and, to a much lesser degree but still of relevance to my dissertation, Nelson Goodman’s (1978) *Ways of World-making* (Harmeling et al., 2009).

#### 2.2.4.1 Arguments In Favour of Moral Ecology

Lahdesmaki (2005), in an empirical study, found entrepreneurs use a variety of strategies in making decisions. Ackhoff (1987) declares that democracy and the people involved in the decision making process in ethics is more important than any theory. The continuous attempt to insert theory and “coding mechanisms” into natural, disorderly activity is prescriptive and based on the belief that morality is about controlling (Carr, 2003). Process ethics relies on concrete situations rather than abstract theories or principles where morality is placed in the realm of pure thought divorced from interests, emotions, and desires that are part of the human experience. Particular, real cases are needed (Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005). Harmeling et al. (2009) state that contingency is senior to virtue or principle. Mc Vea (2009) states that technological progress quickly outmodes moral consensus. Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) caution that an ethical perspective must also consider progress both as a factor in ethics and as an ethical aim because rules

require on-going evaluation and reshaping. Wemp (2005) welcomes diversity in ethical perspectives because many values and tension between them bring new outlooks.

#### 2.2.4.2 Limits of Moral Ecology

Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) state their belief that a litany of conflicting theories and principles gives rise to a kind of “ethical smorgasbord with no guidelines for choice among varying theories, some of which may give conflicting signals concerning right decision and result in totally different courses of action” (p. 308). Carr (2003) offers similar objections, highlighting that non-contextualized, ahistorical, market and social accounts of ethics are misleading, show ethics as a choice instead of a necessary to long-term survival and success, and misrepresent that, indeed, there is no separation from work and the way an individual, not a society, lives his or her life.

#### 2.2.5 Summary of Ethical Perspectives

According to Hicks (2009) contemporary business ethics predominantly emphasizes either stopping predatory business practices or encouraging philanthropy and charity in business. Such perspectives present a less than gracious view of entrepreneurs overall, and are inconsistent with previously cited, empirical studies demonstrating the generally ethical nature of entrepreneurs and their aspirations.

Scholars whose work comprise the eighty-two sources considered in this chapter favour virtue ethics, which presents an optimistic, encouraging characterization of entrepreneurs despite human fallibility and a hectic, tempting, and ever-changing environment. While deontology and utilitarianism are both legitimate ethical perspectives, only limited support exists among scholars for either approach in teaching ethics to entrepreneurs, primarily because both perspectives rely on outdated, modernist views (Machan, 1999). Nevertheless, ideas about social contracts and reasoned decision making are important ethical factors to consider. Moral ecology is significant, too, because it can be readily observed that certain ethical concepts are iteratively refined and sometimes redefined as technology, societies, and humanity evolve.

Virtue ethics are helpful, interesting, and essential; yet, contemporary glorification of the ancient Greeks is not practical and reliance on religion or theory to teach virtue ethics is too specialized for broad, contemporary educational purposes. Empirical studies and reasoned arguments support deontology, utilitarianism, and moral ecology; however, many conceptual difficulties and practical limits exist. The major ethical theories will benefit from an overarching, coordinating approach; in Chapter Three, I introduce and explain how indeed each theory is subsumed in Poetics, particularly Northrop Frye's (1957) system. In Chapter Four, I demonstrate the ways ethical theory and Frye's Poetics converge; and in Chapter Five, I evaluate my proposition.

## 2.3 Education: Aims, Resources, and Methods

Clearly stated, comprehensive educational aims provide the foundation for any education program including curriculum development, instructional methods, selection of educational resources and evaluation. In this section, I collect and summarize the broad and specific educational aims, resources, and instructional methods that educators have noted that they used to assist student entrepreneurs pursue freedom according to their individual uniqueness and ambitions for economic change.

### 2.3.1 Educational Aims

The most prevalent aims in ethics education for entrepreneurs are to inform and inspire entrepreneurs so they may define and actualize a fulfilling, purposeful life; and to reveal the limits of technical and financial finality and the widespread 'costs' of these in people's lives (Gustafson, 2009; Cornwall & Naughton, 2003; DeClercq & Dakhli, 2009; Gilbert, 2002). Three specific aims appear in the scholarly sources about education in ethics for entrepreneurs: knowledge about the world and ethical reflection, moral imagination, and inspiration for a better future for oneself and others.

#### 2.3.1.1 A. Knowledge About the World and Ethical Reflection

Educating for knowledge about the world should embrace the full entrepreneurial cycle because society and people themselves change over time (Hannafey, 2003). As depicted in the first section of this chapter, entrepreneurship by its very nature involves many new,

exciting adventures as well as many temptations, pressures, and pitfalls. One of the most important purposes of education in ethics for entrepreneurs is to provide real examples and opportunities to help students to recognize entrepreneurial wrong-doings as well as justifications that entrepreneurs offer for transgressions (Williams, 1997). Education should also dispel media myths valorizing entrepreneurs who heroically break the law (Blockson, 2012); rather, education should situate entrepreneurial rule-breaking in context to show that departures from norms are not a way of life and rule-breaking occurs only in exceptional situations (Brenkert, 2009; Bryant, 2009). Ethics for entrepreneurs should identify and respect the limits of markets. “Not everything can or should be a market or market opportunity. Not everything that can be sold by someone with entrepreneurial flair is something that should be sold” (Brenkert, 2002, p. 33). Knowledge about reality, that is, about the way the world works, corrects the falsehood that an entrepreneur can only succeed at the cost of his or her integrity (Blockson, 2012). Indeed, business never succeeds in the long term without trust and integrity (Benson, 1992).

### 2.3.1.2 Moral Imagination for a Better Future

The nature of human beings, society and humanity, and in particular the nature of entrepreneurs presents much to critique because examples of fallibility are widespread; nevertheless, moral imagination fosters hope that the best can shine through in entrepreneurs and that new, possible worlds can be created through entrepreneurial action (Hartman et al., 2005). Moral imagination in ethics education programs for entrepreneurs will provide examples so that entrepreneurs can conclude that they do have freedom to choose and that their beliefs and actions do indeed contribute to the construction of one's own world (Hartman, et al., 2005; Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005). Moral imagination affirms belief in a higher state and a higher purpose, providing inspiration and guidance in an entrepreneur's life (Carr, 2003; Cornwall & Naughton, 2003). Education grounded in moral imagination contemplates “the *end* in human life . . . The ethical task [of education] is to provide the means to enable this end” (Williams, 1997, p. 3).

### 2.3.1.3 Inspiration

Ethics education for entrepreneurs should foster a belief in oneself (Benson, 1992) and, despite temptation and chaos, confirm that one can create a difference. The previous section of this chapter described the entrepreneurial setting and dilemmas. Many challenges and vagaries exist to tempt the entrepreneur to give up on his or her aspirations or ethical purpose. Education that provides examples of others' circumstances helps aspiring entrepreneurs observe that opposition exists in many forms; however, individuals that remain steadfast to their goals can achieve results.

## 2.3.2 Resources in Ethics Education for Entrepreneurs

Three main educational resources are identified in the scholarly literature: textbooks; literary arts in the forms of film, drama, and fiction; and literary arts in the form of real life exemplars. In the following paragraphs, I describe each of these resources and I summarize their uses and limits according to educators who apply them.

### 2.3.2.1 Textbooks

Textbooks are the most standard and widely used educational resource; however, a number of shortcomings have been identified. I found two analyses of textbooks used in entrepreneurial ethics and one analysis of textbooks used in general business ethics. I included the latter because of its relevance to my dissertation and also because of the number of times scholars cite it in the broader literature on ethics education for entrepreneurs. All three studies identify a significant number of limits in both content and relevance to entrepreneurial practice. Driscoll and Tesfayohannes (2009) performed a content analysis of sixteen textbooks which showed that although examples of "life ethics" were included, textbook content mostly related to large corporations and executive-level decision-making which would be difficult for students to link to their own level of experience and opportunities. Instead, they suggested, educational resources should focus on small, practical matters of everyday life, not simply large, strategic issues (Fassin, 2005).

Tesfayhannes and Driscoll (2010) conducted a content analysis of seven leading textbooks on small business and entrepreneurial ethics. They found that textbook scope was narrow and stated purposes generally focused on creating ventures directed at wealth creation and market growth. Tesfayhannes and Driscoll (2010) write that the textbooks undermine the “role of entrepreneurship education in creating economic values that are bounded by ethically and socially responsible business people” (p. 86). Tesfayhannes and Driscoll (2010) further observed that textbook discussions emphasized reactive strategies instead of proactive actions, and a general deficiency overall existed because “dilemmas related to creating wealth over ethical content promoting a better global society and noble social goals” (p. 99). Naughton & Cornwall (2006) share Tesfayohannes and Driscoll’s objections, protesting that textbooks are “full of imagery of so-called courageous entrepreneurs . . . who attack complex problems, overcome significant obstacles and rest only when they sleep” (p. 73).

Anderson (2014) engaged in a content analysis of over four leading general business ethics textbooks, observing that content was primarily comprised of multi-theory ethics. Anderson (2014) criticizes that the presentation of multiple ethical approaches assumes that the student will be capable of perceiving what form of moral reasoning is most fitting for the situation or crisis at hand. Anderson’s (2014) findings are consistent with findings reported in section xx above in which I discuss the four ethical perspectives, virtue ethics, deontology, utilitarianism, and moral ecology--- conundrums arise due to the absence of an overarching, organizing structure. Educational resources should “include concrete situations rather than abstract theories or principles” (Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2005, p. 309).

For all the reasons described above, some educators tasked with delivering ethics programs to entrepreneurs have turned to literary arts in the form of classics, fiction, drama, and real life exemplars.



### 2.3.2.2 Literary Arts - Classics, Fiction, Film and Drama

Educators who advocate the use of imaginative literary works as instructional resources see greater alignment to overall aims of ethics education. For example, Williams (1997) states that

by cultivating the imagination through art, literature, and film, one would come to see what it might be like to be human and thus be able to answer the fundamental question, ‘Who am I?’ A genuine sense of self expands . . . opens the way for a largeness of heart . . . (p. 1)

In addition to self-discovery, Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) contend that imaginative literary arts

will allow students to see things from a different perspective, regard events from different points of view, expand the number of factors to be taken into consideration, project themselves into another person’s experience, understand what [another] person is feeling or what interest they have in particular outcomes; as such [students will] break through inculcated traditions. (p. 312)

Benson (1992) reports that, in his decades of experience in teaching entrepreneurs, he has found that literary classics help students build confidence, and develop critical thinking skills and intuition; the classics also provide students with a broad sense of the way the world has been seen to work over a long period of time and across diverse settings. Cornwall and Naughton (2003) maintain that ideas about the realities of social and moral life can be found in stories:

the paradigms of virtue adopted by historic communities and cultures persist in an ideal biography, sometimes called a ‘narrative account’. The Western tradition for example accommodates paradigms of virtue exhibited as ‘the life’ of the Homeric warrior, as “the life” of the politically active citizen in a Greek *polis*, and as ‘the life’ of a Christian saint. That is, in order to talk about the virtues of the entrepreneur, we need first to have a concept of how we characterize the entrepreneur. (p. 65)

Imaginative literary arts as educational resources have many strengths regarding the educational aims of moral imagination; and, they do have some relevance to knowledge about the world and inspiration to lead a fulfilling life. However, imaginative literary arts only indirectly instruct about financial and technical finality and about the realities of entrepreneurial life. In addition, if imaginative classics, film, and drama do in fact include entrepreneurs, it is not unreasonable to caution about their likely portrayal of entrepreneurs in the limited roles of romantic hero, trickster, or renegade as identified in the first section of the present chapter under “media”, categorized as an ethical dilemma to the entrepreneur.

### 2.3.2.3 Literary Arts – Real Life Exemplars

As educational resources in teaching ethics to entrepreneurs, Hartman et al. (2005) promote the use of real exemplars whose lives demonstrate precisely what moral imagination and visionary entrepreneurship can achieve in life. Brenkert (2009) maintains that exemplars’ stories and previous experience are invaluable in offering a reference point against which student entrepreneurs can base their own decisions by considering what an exemplar would do. Brenkert (2009) reasons that rigid rules should be replaced by real-life “archetypes” in order to integrate thinking about the world, the broader setting, and moral ideals situated within a flourishing life. The vagaries of reality including various departures from what would strictly be moral ought to be evaluated within the context of a full life, the accomplished life. Mc Vea (2009) argues that personal stories allow for an increase in “moral sensitivity” because personal stories “stimulate very broad consideration for stakeholder interests, broad consideration of alternatives beyond the conventional, and as such, they expand the ‘moral identity’ of students” (p. 501).

A number of exemplars are cited in the literature. For instance, Cheung and Yeo-chi King (2004) investigated several training manuals written by Huizhou merchants (1130 -1200 C.E.), emphasizing “not only the facts of commercial activities but also the importance of the cultivation of good character” (p. 248). Jing Yuan-shan (1894-1903), a Confucian merchant, left many texts about his work and shared rich insights including maxims such as, “with fortune comes fate”, whatever that may be (Cheung and Yeo-chi King, 2004, p.

249). Cheung and Yeo-chi King (2004) also mention the usefulness and invaluable world view shared by Konosuke Matsushita, a Japanese business tycoon, who founded the home electronics company Panasonic and who wrote *Not for Bread Alone* (1984) on the topic of management and business ethics grounded in fairness, harmony, and gratitude.

In the United States, Zeigenfuss (2007) uses *Shameless Exploitation: In Pursuit of the Common Good* (2003) written by Hollywood actor-turned-entrepreneur Paul Newman and his business partner, A. E. Hotchner. Zeigenfuss (2007) states that the founders of the salad dressing line, “Newman’s Own”, are role models that help balance out scandals. The entrepreneurs donated over 150 million dollars to charitable causes. Zeigenfuss (2007) asks student entrepreneurs to read the story of entrepreneurial business success, values, and ethics in order to isolate key facts, characteristics of the founders, and ways they tackled critical problems, and to reflect on what Newman and Hotchner did, and still do, to contribute to their community.

The use of real life exemplars as educational resources potentially meets all the broad and specific educational aims for ethics in entrepreneurship. However valuable historical documents and books written by exemplars may be, limits exist. What is missing is the entire story of the exemplar’s life, the full evolution of thought and circumstances that led the exemplar to choose and persist in a chosen way of life across the entire entrepreneurial cycle: individual with an idea, organization founder, and social and world institutional icon. Alternatively, autobiographies are, surprisingly, not mentioned in the scholarly sources. In Chapter Four, I demonstrate that autobiographies are robust, comprehensive, and simple instructional resources for teaching ethics to entrepreneurs and for addressing all of the educational aims identified in the scholarly literature.

Overall, scholars and educators critique both explicit purposes and content in textbooks used in entrepreneurship education. Some instructors have found partial remedies by opting for imaginative literary arts in the form of the classics, film, and drama. Other educators found real life exemplars to be helpful in reaching educational aims. However, I have come to believe that no other educational resource shows as much promise as autobiography to stimulate meaningful, contextualized, and authentic instruction.

### 2.3.3 Instructional Methods in Teaching Ethics to Entrepreneurs

The subject of ethics can be very sensitive and generally very personal because, essentially, the entrepreneur is navigating and negotiating the opportunity for self-discovery (Benson, 1992). The learning setting should be a “non-judgmental environment that acknowledges variation in assumptions and allows for various forms of ethical reasoning, open discussion, and multi-dimensional reasoning” (Dees & Starr, 1992, p. 112). In order to achieve educational and pedagogic aims, two specific instructional methods were cited by educators in ethics: questioning, and practice.

#### 2.3.3.1 Questioning - What is a Good Life?

Educators provide aspiring entrepreneurs with knowledge about the world, encourage students to imagine a better future, and foster inspiration through varied educational resources. In addition, Tesfayohannes and Driscoll (2010) state:

Many entrepreneurship educators around the world have begun to focus class discussion around the following types of questions: What does it mean to be a good entrepreneur? Is it about making money? Is it about using entrepreneurial talents to contribute to the common good? What is the purpose of business? How does it connect to life purpose? As we are all moral and spiritual beings, it makes sense to bring critical and reflective questions related to social justice, meaning of work, and human dignity into entrepreneurship class discussions. (p. 99)

Cornwall and Naughton (2003) add to the question, “What kind of entrepreneur should I become?” (p. 64) Open-ended questioning allows for a significant amount of freedom so that aspiring entrepreneurs can develop a world view of their own, reflect about entrepreneurial life, refine their aims and purposes in life, and develop moral imagination to realize ethical ways and means to reach their goals.

#### 2.3.3.2 Practice – A Good Life

Educators conclude that both personal integrity and ethical stances are shaped by practicing what model individuals in the community do (Williams, 1997; Carr, 2003). As aspiring entrepreneurs confirm or discover beliefs and as they arrive at tentative ways to

operationalize their beliefs and intentions, Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) advocate the provision of opportunities for students “to test a ‘moral hypothesis’ in order to develop ‘moral maturity’” (p. 309). Buchholz and Rosenthal (2005) also indicate the importance of expanded and diverse ways to “resolve conflicting moral perceptions and complex moral aspects of situations” (p. 309). One specific strategy that Zeigenfuss (2007) has implemented in his classroom is the practice of asking his class to purchase the book mentioned earlier, *Shameless Exploitation: In Pursuit of the Common Good* (Newman & Hotchner, 2003). He then asks that if a student likes the book that he or she buy one for friend because the book’s proceeds become a donation to a cause that supports camps for kids. Zeigenfuss (2007) writes that students are immediately involved in a grass roots ethics and entrepreneurship strategy and students immediately know that they are helping because “every sale may give a little more hope to a child” (p. 20).

### 2.3.4 Summary of Education Perspectives

Aims in ethics education for entrepreneurs include knowledge about the world, moral imagination, and inspiration to continue to pursue one’s aspirations. Aims are approached by helping aspiring entrepreneurs reflect on and define a purposeful life and by helping demonstrate to students the many unfortunate examples of lives defined exclusively through technical and financial finality. Educators have observed a number of shortcomings in existing textbooks, thus turning to literary arts to facilitate entrepreneur achievement across all educational aims. While there is success with imaginative literary arts such as the classics, film, and drama, not all aspects of the desired educational outcomes are addressed. Instead, a number of educators advocate various forms of texts created by real life exemplars. Autobiography, is not mentioned in the scholarly literature; however, autobiography has rich potential as an educational resource to teach ethics to entrepreneurs, which I will demonstrate in Chapter Four.

## 2.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed eighty-two theoretical and empirical sources from 500 B.C to present day, from several countries across the world and across the entrepreneurial cycle of individual to organization founder to social and world institutional icon in order

to isolate scholars' present world views and the present "ethos" about ethics education in entrepreneurship.

The prevailing world view on human nature and the pursuit of freedom through economic change is that the entrepreneur is a poet, or liberal artist; that entrepreneurship is a new, hopeful activity in human history; and that both the entrepreneur's and entrepreneurship's ethical foundations must be protected for humanity's sake.

Educators who teach ethics to entrepreneurs try to liberate students from the many personal and systemic troubles they will encounter. Entrepreneurs do not always succeed; there are comedies and tragedies in life. The economic and moral systems that entrepreneurs replace are powerful, wealthy and experienced; nevertheless, aspiring entrepreneurs, one customer at a time, win agreement that the world can and should be different and entrepreneurs work systematically every day to make it so. They are primarily liberal artists ---poets.

## Chapter 3

### 3 Frye's Poetics: Foundation, Approach and Tool for Ethics Education

In the previous chapter, I characterized entrepreneurship as a new, distinct area of study that conceptually began a few decades ago with Mc Lelland (1961); research in entrepreneurship is in the stages of early theoretical development and preliminary academic discussions. Publications on pedagogy using literary sources in ethics education for entrepreneurs constitute an even smaller, fledgling literature set, simply recommending literature without yet grounding recommendations in literary or educational theory. I did not find any education theories in the scholarly sources. The four scholars explicitly citing literary theorists reference only three thinkers, and do so to conceptualize the essence of entrepreneurs (Hartman, 2008; Harmeling et al., 2009; Velamuri, 2002) or entrepreneurship (Sarasvathy, 2002); they do not use literary theory as a foundation for pedagogy and ethics education. My aims in this chapter are to explicate Frye's (1957) Poetics as a foundation for ethics education, well suited to the entrepreneurial setting; and to present a respective instructional approach and tool. .

In this chapter, for the first time, I combine two independent ideas found in the scholarly sources: first, the general recommendation for the use of literary sources as a means to ethics education; and second, the theoretical conceptualization of entrepreneurs as liberal artists, classified using only three literary theorists: Richard Rorty's (1989) *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*, Allan Bloom's (1973) *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* and Northrop Frye's ideas on Poetics. For a complete account, I offer a fleeting paragraph each for Rorty and Bloom; and I outline the explicit ways in which they both ultimately rely on Frye's ideas, particularly those found in *Anatomy of Criticism* (1957). I focus on Frye's (1957) Poetics as an introductory foundation for ethics education because his liberal views about individuals converge with the poetic conceptualization of the entrepreneur and because his progressive purposes for education align with the educational aims stated in the previous chapter. I draw on Frye's Poetic framework as an instructional method because of its potential to provide an organizing, meta-ethical structure for the cited ethical perspectives. To legitimize my approach, in another first, I

introduce the conceptual and teleological congruence between the major ethical theories of virtue ethics, deontology, utilitarianism and moral ecology, respectively, to the primary literary elements of character, literary plot, literary genre, and Poetics.

### 3.1 Richard Rorty's Poetic Contingency

All four scholars who referenced literary theorists cited Richard Rorty's (1989) *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (Hartman, 2008; Harmeling et al., 2009; Sarasvathy, 2002; Velamuri, 2002). As the title of his book implies, Rorty focuses on the unpredictable nature of existence and the powerful, chaotic determinism of both society and nature over individuals. According to Rorty (1989), "poetic, artistic, philosophical, scientific, or political progress results from the accidental coincidence of a private obsession with a public need" (Rorty, 1989 in Harmeling et al., 2009 p. 345). Rorty means that "things just happen" and that, indeed, few individuals exercise free will or achieve self-actualization. Rorty's (1989) view is that human existence is somewhat of a hapless state:

To sum up, I want to distinguish human solidarity as the identification with "humanity as such" and as the self-doubt which has gradually, over the last few centuries, been inculcated into inhabitants of the democratic state—doubt about their own sensitivity to the pain and humiliation of others, doubt that present institutional arrangements are adequate to deal with this pain and humiliation . . . . (p. 198)

In literary terms, Rorty's stance on life is named in the title, Irony; in the Ironic story line, nothing that is substantive changes despite endeavour after endeavour. While Rorty's perspective may offer some knowledge about the way things are, it is not likely to meet educational needs in moral imagination or inspiration. Furthermore, Rorty does not offer an explicit Poetic approach for use in teaching ethics to entrepreneurs; his narrow view of the world, applied to autobiography, would present limits. All that aspiring entrepreneurs would potentially see would be contingencies because that is all they are guided to look for. Since Rorty (1989) relies significantly on Harold Bloom's notions of the poet (Rorty, 1989, p. 20, 22, 24, 28-30, 34-35, 40-42, 53, 61, 80, 82, and 117), Bloom's work is



considered next as another potential, grounding approach to Poetics and ethics education for entrepreneurs.

### 3.2 Harold Bloom's Poetic Anxiety

Only two scholars referred to Harold Bloom's (1973) *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (Harmeling et al., 2009; Velamuri, 2002); nevertheless, Bloom's broad idea of the poet has had so much influence that it warrants further investigation. Harmeling et al. (2009) explain Bloom's idea that "poets struggle to create their own poetic visions without being overcome by the influence of the previous poets who inspired them to write in the first place . . . (p. 355). Bloom means that individuals involved in creative work such as Poetics and entrepreneurship experience continuous difficulties in originality, authenticity, and even credibility. They become anxious when they realize that there is nothing really new about their own ideas; rather they are influenced, therefore more or less created, by predecessors. Bloom (1973) summarizes:

In short, this book offers a theory of poetry by way of a description of poetic influence, or the story of intra-poetic relationships. One aim of this theory is corrective: to de-idealize our accepted accounts of how one poet helps to form another . . . . Poetic history in this book's argument is held to be indistinguishable from poetic influence, since strong poets make that history by misreading one another, so as to clear imaginative space for themselves . . . . Weaker talents idealize figures of capable imagination appropriate for themselves. But nothing is got for nothing and self-appropriation involves the immense anxieties of indebtedness, for what strong maker desires the realization that he has failed to create himself? (p. 5)

Bloom's basic position is that imaginative works barely exist; they are determined in the past by others of superior creative endowment. There are few, if any, new ideas. Like Rorty, Bloom is also an Ironist because he shares the view that forces external to the individual are very strong; and, while change is not haphazard, it is unlikely. Again, as with Rorty, aspiring entrepreneurs would only see anxiety and influence since that is all Bloom's view, strictly applied, encourages them to see. Bloom's *The Anxiety of*

*Influence: A Theory of Poetry* will not satisfy educational aims nor does it offer a practical instructional approach. I use, then, Bloom's own criterion, influence, to introduce Northrop Frye. When speaking about Northrop Frye, Bloom (2004) states, "He is certainly the largest and most crucial literary critic in the English language since the divine Walter [Paton] and the divine Oscar [Wilde]; he really is that good (Bloom in Denham, 2004).

### 3.3 Northrop Frye's Poetics

In the embryonic, academic literature on ethics education for entrepreneurs, Sarasvathy (2002) is the only scholar to cite Frye's Poetics. In his article, *Entrepreneurship as Economics with Imagination*, Sarasvathy (2002) builds his central hypothesis about the imaginative, creative essence of entrepreneurship around a quotation from Frye's (1964) book called *The Educated Imagination* stating, "the fundamental job of the imagination in ordinary life . . . is to produce out of the society we have to live in, a vision of the society we want to live in" (Frye 1964 in Sarasvathy, 2002 p. 95). Sarasvathy's use of Frye to connect entrepreneurship and imagination also provides a preliminary link between Frye and educational aims found in the current scholarly literature. Frye's work in Poetics extends from his fundamental tenet that individuals do indeed imagine and create a life albeit within the broad, organized way the world works. Frye does not mean to say that there are no vagaries in life (Rorty) nor millennia of earlier ideas (Bloom), he means that to some degree individuals do have capacity for creative agency, free will and self-actualization in the structure of the world. Insight and education into such capabilities is discoverable through Poetics.

#### 3.3.1 Frye on Poetics: A Foundation for Ethics and Education

According to Frye (1957), Poetics, ethics, and education are inseparable Frye (1957) refers to the imagination as the creative, good-willed agency in an individual, capable of creating new realities; this could be construed as the human spirit. He describes Poetics as the process in which liberal education is achieved; essentially he means the pursuit of freedom. For Frye (1957), Poetics is not a composition derived exclusively or primarily from social processes, rather it is a truth found through creative insight:

But poets . . . have always believed in some kind of imaginative truth . . . The mathematical and the verbal universes are doubtless different ways of conceiving the same universe. The objective world affords a provisional means of unifying experience, and it is natural to infer a higher unity . . . but it is not easy to find a language capable of expressing a higher intellectual universe. Metaphysics, theology, history, [and] law have all been used, but they are verbal constructs, and the further we take them, the more clearly their metaphorical and mythical outlines show through. (Frye, 1957, p. 354)

These “higher intellectual truths” demonstrate a unity among human beings, others, and the broader world; essentially, they are ethics. Language used to name things and phenomena in the material world are inadequate to name this ethical “higher unity”, so Poetics makes use of metaphors and other literary imagery. Poetics must be viewed according to its broader, ethical purpose, rather than simply its literary form:

. . . the moment we go from the individual work of art to the sense of the total form of the art, the art becomes no longer an object of aesthetic contemplation but an ethical instrument, participating in the work of civilization. (Frye, 1957, p. 349)

An ethical instrument can be described as a tool that facilitates insight into higher truths that transcend an individual’s or society’s time, place, or circumstance. According to Frye (1957), the purpose of Poetics as a means of discovering higher truths constitutes ethical criticism, or, freedom of thought and a corresponding way of life.

The goal of ethical criticism is transvaluation, [which means] the ability to look at contemporary social values with the detachment of one who is able to compare them to some degree with the infinite vision of possibilities . . . . One who possesses such a standard of transvaluation is in a state of intellectual freedom. One who does not possess it is a creature of whatever social values get him first: he has only compulsions of habit, indoctrination, and prejudice. (p. 348)

Transvaluation can be described as the ability to a) see possibilities instead of limitations; b) imagine a better world and way of life; and, c) work toward the realization of the imagined world and way of life. It enables individuals to dream about improvements and avoid pitfalls in order to define and pursue a *good life*. This *is* the essence of ethics and *is* the foundation of liberal education.

Education is the process of “leading out”, or the pursuit of freedom. According to Frye (1957), only imaginative works, that is, Poetics, can liberate individuals from history, society, and other limits:

the ethical purpose of a liberal education is to liberate, which only can mean to make one capable of conceiving society as free, classless and urbane. No such society exists, which is one reason why liberal education must be deeply concerned with works of imagination. The imaginative element in works of art, again, lifts them clear of the bondage of history. (p. 347 - 348)

In Frye’s Poetics (1957), ethics and education coalesce:

Anything that emerges from the total experience of [Poetics] to form part of a liberal education becomes, by virtue of that fact, part of the emancipated and humane community . . . (p. 349)

Applied to popular and imaginative works, Poetics provides insight into higher truths, unalterable by social, historical or geographical circumstances. Frye places Poetics, ethics and education together; **and** his stance aligns with the scholarly conceptions of entrepreneur as liberal artist and poet; **and** Frye’s aims converge with the educational aims stated in the eighty two sources: knowledge about the world, moral imagination and inspiration. In the next section, I describe the principles that Frye offers, when combined, as a broad approach to education in ethics through Poetics.

### 3.3.2 Frye’s Premises for Sympathetic, Inductive, and Primary Inquiry

Frye promotes a sympathetic approach to diverse and new literary works in order to observe unity among varied sources and in order to locate commonality in higher, human

purposes and experiences. He advocates an inductive investigation in which the “ethos”, themes and truths emerge from literature itself rather than from a limiting personal view or from a narrow scholarly stance. Frye espouses the two Humanist tenets of *ad initio* which means “from the beginning” or, the location of primary principles; and *ad fontes*, which means “to the sources” or, the direct reading of original, literary sources. Using a sympathetic, inductive approach applied to original resources, Frye identified primary literary and life principles, which he developed into the framework that I describe in the following section.

Frye analyzed a range of Poetic resources to find their similarities; he looked expressly for patterns to see how all the Poetic resources may fit together as a unified, foundational whole. What emerged was his system. Frye’s sympathetic, harmonizing, coordinating approach is an essential, instructional point relevant to aspiring entrepreneurs and their educators. Openness to new ideas and alternate perspectives is necessary to locating broader realities and higher unity across humankind. According to Frye (1957),

one’s definite position is one’s weakness, the source of one’s liability to error and prejudice, and to gain adherents to a definite position is only to multiply one’s weaknesses . . . . (p. 19)

Moral imagination and the creation of new realities depends upon an openness and sensitivity to diverse views. Enlightenment is difficult if individuals look only for validation of what is already widely known or commonly supported. Poetics helps a person find additional good examples, find out about the way the world works, and it also helps him or her decide about and predict what to do in otherwise uncertain circumstances. According to Frye, individuals must first be open to looking for similarities before universal and common factors can be seen.

Perspectives about shared human experiences, aims and conditions do exist in theory across all areas of research; however, for Frye, imposing abstract or unrelated themes from disciplines outside the Humanities is invasive and limiting to Poetics. Frye promotes inductive inquiry.

The axioms and postulates of [Poetics], however, have to grow out of the art it deals with. The first thing a [poet] has to do is read literature, to make an inductive survey of his own field and let his [poetic] principles shape themselves solely out of his knowledge of that field. (Frye, 1957, p. 7).

The use of theory or axioms not derived directly from Poetic sources, according to Frye, is unwarranted.

[Poetic] principles cannot be taken over ready-made from theology, philosophy, politics, science or any combination of these. To subordinate [Poetics] to an externally derived critical attitude is to exaggerate the values in literature that can be related to the external source, whatever that is. (Frye, 1957, p. 7)

For example, a Feminist reading of Shakespeare teaches and emphasizes more about Feminism than it teaches about Shakespeare's literary plot and character development. In other words, a theory tends to prove itself rather than allowing themes in the text to emerge authentically. Another concern for Frye is literary authorities' and literary critics' lists of important works.

It is all too easy to impose on literature an extra-literary schematism, a sort of religio-political colour filter which make some poets leap into prominence and others show up as dark and faulty . . . . (Frye, 1957, p. 7)

Frye (1957) encourages students, aspiring poets and scholars to read primary sources instead of relying on others' narrow opinions because "with the growing complication of secondary sources, one misses that sense of consolidating progress . . . (p. 8)

It is clear that the absence of a [system of Poetics] has created a power vacuum where all the neighboring disciplines move in . . . . But if the varied interests of critics [and theoretical stances] could be related to a central, expanding pattern of systemic comprehension, this undertow would disappear. (Frye, 1957, p. 12)

Through a sympathetic sensibility, inductive inquiry, and a review of primary sources, Frye (1957) discovered a guiding, educational framework emerging exclusively from

literary sources in order to provide a broad guide for writing and Poetic analysis. In a way, it is the collective “ethos” of many literary examples---a form or coordinated system derived from centuries of ideas and observations about the interplay between an individual, society and Nature.

### 3.3.3 Frye’s Framework for Poetics

Frye (1957) wrote *Anatomy of Criticism* for scholars and students as a general guide for the creation and study of Poetics in order to ‘let the mind play freely around a subject in which there has been much endeavor . . . (p. 3). Frye (1957) surveyed literary works from the ancient Greeks to his own time in order to find a simple, expanding, coordinating system of human experience:

Aristotle seems to me to approach poetry as a biologist would approach a system of organisms, picking out its genera and species, formulating the broad laws of literary experience, and, in short, writing as though he believed there was a totally intelligible structure of knowledge attainable about poetry, which is not poetry itself, or the experience of it, but poetics . . . . One would imagine that, after two thousand years of post-Aristotelian literary activity, his views on poetics . . . could be re-examined in light of the fresh evidence. (Frye, 1957, p. 14)

Although there are many nuances and detailed additions that Frye offers in his framework, only his most elementary structure will be addressed in my dissertation for reasons of clarity and brevity. In *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye presents only four literary genres, only six phases in literary plots, and only two types of characters.

#### 3.3.3.1 The Four Literary Genres

Literary genres are types of compositions. Frye (1957) identifies four categories: Comedy, Romance (Drama), Tragedy and Irony/Satire. In many ways, literary genres are classifications of outcomes or consequences because they rely so much on the way the composition ends. For example, it is the ending in Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* that establishes it as a Tragedy. If the entire play unfolded in exactly the same manner but Juliet arose and they were married the next day, the play would have been a Romance

(Drama). Literary genres are endings. They are comments regarding consequences of actions or consequences of circumstances. In Comedy and Romance (Drama), well intentioned individuals succeed. In Tragedy and Irony/Satire, well intentioned individuals fail, or conversely, ill-intentioned individuals succeed. There are six phases of literary plot that coalesce to form the various versions of literary genre.

### 3.3.3.2 The Six Phases of Literary Plot

The four literary genres each unfold uniformly within the overall organization of human experience according to a sequence called a literary plot. In Frye's (1957) system, the literary plot, irrespective of genre, evolves through six phases: birth, youth, quest, change in condition, new reality, and contemplative or reflective period. The six phases may align to biologic age, but not necessarily so; for example, a "birth phase" can begin when any new venture begins, when an individual moves to a new town, or when an entrepreneur with an idea sets out to change his and others' lives through his or her creative works. There is an evolution from inexperience to experience and an interplay between an individual and, as the case may be, himself/herself, another individual, society or nature. Such factors combine in various ways for various reasons that Frye provides; however, for the purposes of the dissertation, I only address the two genres that make significant movement from inexperience to experience, Comedy and Tragedy, because entrepreneurs by their very nature start out inexperienced in that they create something new and not yet widely available or established in society. In Table 3.1 below, I provide an overview of the six phases of literary plot according to Frye and I offer a brief description of what each of the phases means in terms of the relationships between a character and the society in which he or she lives. In Table 3.2 below, I summarize the specific dynamics of literary plot in the genres of Comedy and Tragedy.



**Table 3.1 Frye's (1957) Six Phases of Literary Plot**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>1. Birth (Inexperience)</b>	The character is inexperienced in life and exists in a society not determined by himself or herself.
<b>2. Youth (Inexperience)</b>	The character begins to experience life and learns more about society. In this phase, the character begins to develop a viewpoint on the nature of society.
<b>3. Quest (Inexperience)</b>	The character is much more experienced and sets out to change his or her condition as well as some aspect of society; however, there are antipathetic factors.
<b>4. Change in Condition (Experience)</b>	The character either succeeds or fails to change his or her condition and society; and now has a self-determined experience in life, for better or for worse.
<b>5. New Reality (Experience)</b>	The character now experiences life on an on-going basis according to either his or her success or failure in it.
<b>6. Contemplation &amp; Reflection (Experience)</b>	The character, fully experienced, is cognizant of the consequences of his or her actions or the circumstances that prevented them and is in a position to survey life and draw conclusions.

**Table 3.2 Summary of Frye's (1957) Literary Plot in Comedy and Tragedy**

	<b>Comedy</b>	<b>Tragedy (Type A)</b>	<b>Tragedy (Type B)</b>
<b>Phase 1 to 3 Individual</b>	Good, Inexperienced	Good, Inexperienced	Bad, Inexperienced
<b>Phase 1 to 3 Society</b>	Good; Experienced  Powerful or wealthy and outdated	Bad; Experienced  Powerful or wealthy and corrupt	Good; Experienced  Powerful or wealthy and benevolent
<b>Phase 3 to 6 Individual</b>	Good, experienced individual succeeds	Good, experienced Individual fails	Bad, experienced individual succeeds
<b>Phase 3 to 6 Society</b>	Out-dated society is changed for the better	Powerful, wealthy and corrupt society is not changed	Benevolent society is changed for the worse

### 3.3.3.3 Two Types of Characters: “Good” and “Bad”

In *Anatomy of Criticism*, Frye (1957) does not explicitly use the terms “good” and “bad” to classify characters. He presents a number of intricacies and analogies derived from various examples across the six phases of literary plot within the four literary genres. I generalize his themes into the categories of “good” and “bad” as succinct terms to

communicate the broad, not specific, qualities that Frye (1957) discusses in classifying characters. Essentially, a “good” character is well intentioned toward others, animals, and the environment, and is a complementary member of society if that society is also “good”, striving toward constructive ends. Conversely, a “bad” character is ill-intentioned toward others, animals, or nature; and a “bad” character is an adversary to a “good” society. As represented in Table 3.2 above, the harmonious or adversarial interplay between a character and society results in success or failure. The consequences of individual and social interplay is Comedy if a good character succeeds in a good society. The consequences of individual and social interplay is Tragedy if a good character fails in a bad society, or alternatively if a bad character succeeds in a good society.

### 3.4 Frye’s Framework as a Meta-Ethical Perspective

The major elements in Frye’s framework maintain similar conceptual and teleological features to the primary ethical theories identified in Chapter Two of my dissertation. For instance, character addresses the nature of human beings (virtue ethics), literary plot indicates the interplay of a character’s intentions toward society (deontology), and literary genre classifies consequences that result from various actions (utilitarianism). Poetics is a form of ethical criticism that shapes individuals and the societies they live in (moral ecology). In this section, I introduce the conceptual and teleological coherence between the major literary elements and the primary ethical theories. My stance is exploratory yet promising; and I will use it in Chapter Five to comment on content found in the autobiographies I will consider in the next chapter.

#### 3.4.1 Character as Virtue Ethics - Qualities Required for Happiness

Virtue ethics is a universal perspective that focuses on the universal qualities required for happiness, originating from within an individual rather than from social traditions. Some of the limits identified in the scholarly literature for this view are the priority and degree of the various virtues: is courage, for example, more important than respect? At what point is courage unreasonable? The broad character attributes of “good” or “bad” are essentially the sum-total of disposition. Lists of prioritized virtues and their counterpart

vices can be operationalized and simplified by considering disposition in its totality as “good” or “bad”. Poetics being a comprehensive system, ‘good’ and “bad” characterizations cannot be established outside literary plot and literary genre, which provide context to, for example, the motive of the courageous individual. Literary character brings virtue ethics into broader alignment.

### 3.4.2 Literary Plot as Deontology - Duty to Act to Others' Benefit

Deontology is the ethical perspective that upholds that individuals have a primordial duty to act in a manner that is beneficial to others and that is consistent with principles of agreed upon conduct. Some of the stated limits for this perspective are that individuals do not always act in a self-disinterested manner, that moral principles become outdated, and that the rule makers’ definitions of ethics is compliance with their views. Frye’s interplay between characters and society and the movement between these in the six phases of literary plot provides a reference point to evaluate the merits of duties and actions. A “good” individual in a “good” society is naturally acting in accordance with his or her duty to others. There is no altruism because the “good” character agrees and wants to act as he/she does. A “good” character acting to change a “bad” society is still considered virtuous by universal terms even though he/she is acting outside socially defined rules of conduct. Poetics is universal and unburdens an individual from social norms; and when viewed from a universal position of humankind, the “good” character acting to change a “bad” society is essentially still in compliance with his or her duties to others. Literary plot coordinates and reconciles deontology, addresses its limits, and provides a context in which duty can be evaluated.

### 3.4.3 Literary Genre as Utilitarianism – Relative Greatest Good

Utilitarianism maintains that an individual act and the consequences arising from the act are ethical if the outcome is useful or beneficial to people. Some limits to this perspective are that it leaves room for all manner of rule-breaking to be condoned; as well, the measures for legitimizing the “greatest good” are ambiguous. The literary genres are outcomes---classifications of how a story ends. Literary genre is educational and helpful in weighing the “greatest good” because the genres show the way the world responds to

certain acts instead of the way an individual may rationalize the “greatest good” of an act. For example, a “bad” character minimizing his or her transgressions against a “good” society is a universal Tragedy. Poetics makes clear the effect that the transgressions have on the “good” society, a broadened view to which the rationalizing individual may not have, or want to have, access; it widens the lens. For example, in Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge complies with the law and insists on labor exchange for the salary he pays his employee, a position that appears to be the “greatest good” to him. Scrooge is utilitarian in his office management; however, when the lens is widened to include not only the family of his employee, but also to include his own future, the “greatest good” to Scrooge significantly changes. According to Frye’s universal structure about how world works, this story would be a Tragedy, a “bad” character who harms a “good” society, if Scrooge continued to rationalize his conduct. The literary genres widen the criteria for utilitarian deliberations and, in a sense, illuminate the outcome (Comedy, Tragedy) of outcomes (actions). Here, again, Poetics provides a coordinating structure.

#### 3.4.4 Poetics as Moral Ecology – Relative and Creative Agreement

Moral ecology is the approach to ethics that embraces the notion that ethics evolve in a similar manner to biology; there are a number of ethical theories and a version of natural selection occurs wherein the strongest ideas survive through adaptation according to new influences in the social environment. Some limits of this view are that many ethical perspectives compete for primary place, thus rendering the entire subject confusing; that there is a disconnection of views from their ends—survival; and that such views are detached from the way an individual lives his or her life. Frye’s Poetics provides insight into episodes of progress contained in the six phases of literary plot; however, his organized structure of human experience is much broader. Frye doesn’t just describe what Poetics is, he tells what it does. Frye’s Poetics is a didactic tool that uncovers a universal system, a world view, from literary works **so that** individuals can conceive of the anatomy and functioning of character, literary plot, and literary genre **so that** they can then define their life, imagine a better future, select courses of action to realize this future, and avoid pitfalls along the way. Not only does Frye’s Poetics offer a perspective

to coordinate the major ethical theories, it also presents an instructional tool that, when applied, can meet all the educational aims mentioned in Chapter Two: knowledge about the world and ethical reflection, moral imagination and inspiration.

### 3.5 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have explicated Frye's Poetics as a grounding orientation for ethics education, a promising instructional tool and a potentially fruitful meta-ethical stance to coordinate and organize the major ethical theories. I demonstrated the shortcomings of superimposed, limited theoretical stances including Rorty's contingency, Bloom's anxiety, and any one of the major ethical perspectives applied in isolation of the others. The purpose of this chapter was to offer both a robust foundation and a specific instructional guide to ground and focus the very broad questions related to the study of ethics such as, *What is a good life?* In this chapter, I focused on Poetics as a guiding sensibility through which answers to this question may be found. In Chapter four, I consider real life exemplars, autobiographies, whose lives provide content to which Frye's system for Poetics can be applied. In doing so, I demonstrate the utility and fruitfulness of autobiography as fitting educational resources to teach ethics to entrepreneurs.

## Chapter 4

### 4 Applied Poetics and Autobiography for Ethics Education

In this chapter, I carry forward, expand upon and demonstrate the findings from Chapter Two that indicate real life exemplars are the most helpful and useful resources to teach ethics to entrepreneurs. While autobiography is not explicitly mentioned in the scholarly sources, I introduce it here because, in my experience, entrepreneurs read and like autobiographies; as such, they are authentic educational resources. In its simplest form, ethics attempts to answer the question, “*What is a good life?*” It makes sense, then, to consider exemplary lives. Autobiographies are a natural extension of both scholarly findings and entrepreneurial practice; and, as I will show, they essentially address ethical questions.

As a Poetic resource, autobiography is important because the account is told within the world view of the individual himself or herself, and any potential filters, additions or confusions of a biographer are not present. For the third and last set of literary examples used in my dissertation, I present four autobiographies written by iconic entrepreneurs whose lives span a period from 1867 to 2007 in the cosmetics and beauty industry: Madam C. J. Walker’s (Bundles, 2001) *On Her Own Ground*, Estee Lauder’s (1985) *A Success Story*, Mary Kay Ash’s (1981) *Miracles Happen*, and Anita Roddick’s (1992) *Body and Soul*. These autobiographies span four generations in order to consider different times, places and circumstances.

My presentation of four Poetic resources serves two functions: first, it demonstrates their coherence and convergence to the scholarly sources with regard to the nature, the ethical dilemmas, and the ethical decision making of entrepreneurs across the entire entrepreneurial cycle: individual with an idea, organization founder, and institution; and, second, it provides an example of the usefulness of Poetics applied to popular texts from different times, places, and circumstances, as an educational resource in ethics. To organize my description of the autobiographies, I use Frye’s six phases of literary plot: birth, youth, quest, change in condition, new reality, and contemplative period. A third purpose of the current chapter is to demonstrate the usefulness of Frye’s (1957) Poetics as

an instructional method in ethics; my argument will be drawn together further in Chapter Five.

## 4.1 Introduction to Four Generations of Exemplary Entrepreneurs

I searched several websites and databases to find autobiographies written by exemplary entrepreneurs across as wide a time span as possible in order to locate resources written by real life exemplars from different times, places, and circumstances. It was more difficult to locate self-authored sources than I expected as so many works are collaborations or works written about entrepreneurs by biographers. Even so, I was able to locate four sources in the beauty industry ranging from the early nineteenth century through to the present day.

The four authors I selected are all women entrepreneurs who created their own products and founded their own organizations instead of participating in others' companies as hired Chief Executive Officers (employees) or venture capitalists (already wealthy investors). Each of their companies were self-made where revenue was generated from "grass roots", direct sales instead of through the benefit of established financial connections or family funding sources; and, they all expanded globally. Their achievements are iconic by any measure because total dollars in profit per item sold was low and their international success depended upon a high volume of sales through direct appeal to a wide range of people from many places, and circumstances. While my first selection criterion was a practical matter--the availability of qualified autobiographies--I also selected the beauty industry and these authors in particular for other, including personal, reasons.

First, three of the entrepreneurs resonate with my own circumstances; they were middle-aged women who started their companies as a second or third career due to economic hardship and in order to care for their children. Second, during the timeframe considered, employment equity for women was not highly established and therefore studying women removes the factor of social or economic privilege in the marketplace. The study of women emphasizes the Poetic element of different circumstances and it adds to the

literature by addressing Velamuri's (2002) concern that there are very few female role models (p. 136). Third, scholars in a related field, clothing and textiles, have successfully translated their research into books for popular audiences and have fared quite well; one example is Linda Przybyszewski's *The Lost Art of Dress* (2014). Lastly, the beauty industry is an integral part of everyday life (even if one only uses soap) and so it is relevant and accessible to most readers; the conceptual and analytic aspects of the study will not be confused or over-shadowed by a complex, isolated entrepreneurial industry such as insurance or manufacturing.

The four iconic entrepreneurs whose autobiographies I describe in the present chapter are: Madam C. J. Walker, Estee Lauder, Mary Kay Ash, and Anita Roddick. Table 4.1 below introduces them, their organizations, their purposes and autobiographies.

**Table 4.1 Four Generations of Exemplary Entrepreneurs**

<b>Entrepreneur as Individual with an Idea</b>	<b>Entrepreneur as Organization Founder</b>	<b>Entrepreneur as Social and World Institution</b>	<b>Autobiography</b>
Madam C. J. Walker (1867-1919) Hair care products	Madam C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company (1910)	Race relations and racial, economic freedom	On Her Own Ground (2001)
Estee Lauder (1908-2004) Skincare and cosmetics	Estee Lauder Companies (1946)	None Stated	Estee: A Success Story (1985)
Mary Kay Ash (1918-2001) Skincare and cosmetics	Mary Kay Cosmetics Inc. (1963)	Women and economic freedom	Miracles Happen (1981)
Anita Roddick (1942-2007) Skincare and cosmetics	The Body Shop (1976)	Environment, Third World trade and labour issues	Body and Soul (1992)

In the following sections, I present representative citations from each of the exemplary entrepreneurs' autobiographies in order to present a clean, unfiltered message from the entrepreneurs themselves. Using such an approach, organized direct citations, reconstructs the main elements of the text for completeness and for the benefit of those who have not previously read the books. Citations are organized using Frye's (1957)



Poetics. Life cycles appear to manifest in many, harmonizing ways; and, for clarity and integration in this chapter and for ease of analysis in Chapter Five, I connect the headings of each of Frye's (1957) six phases of literary plot and the implicit and explicit elements of the entrepreneurial cycle outlined in Chapter Two. These are outlined in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2 Phases of Literary Plot and Sequence in Entrepreneurial Cycle**

<b>Frye's (1957) Six Phases of Literary Plot</b>	<b>Entrepreneurial Cycle</b>
Phase 1 – Inexperience - Birth	Setting and Life Circumstances
Phase 2 - Inexperience - Youth	Foundations for Pursuit of Freedom through Economic Change
Phase 3 - Inexperience - Quest	Entrepreneur as Individual with an Idea
Phase 4 – Experience – Change in Condition	Entrepreneur as Organization Founder
Phase 5 – Experience – New Reality	Entrepreneur as Institution in Society and the World
Phase 6 – Contemplative Period	World View and Reflections on a Way of Life

I provide only one or two very brief citations for each autobiography in order to establish primary facts about each entrepreneur's life in each of the first five phases of literary plot and their corresponding entrepreneurial cycle. However, it is in the final chapters or epilogues that each entrepreneur imparts their most compelling ethical reflections and farewell messages to entrepreneurs about virtues required for happiness, duties to others, the greatest good, and moral ecology. In the final pages, the entrepreneurs offer perspectives on the way the world is, they present a vision of the future that can be realized through moral imagination, and they inspire others. For this reason as well as for rich Poetic analysis of the universal, resonating particulars in ethical themes across time, place, and circumstance in Chapter Five, I include longer, direct citations in phase six of literary plot, the contemplative period, that I correlate to the sequence in the entrepreneurial cycle of world view and reflections on a way of life. In the concluding sections of each data set, I comment on Frye's elements of character and literary genre.

## 4.2 Madam C. J. Walker – *On Her Own Ground* (2001)

Sarah Breedlove (1867-1919), later known as Madam C.J. Walker, founded a company that made a line of hair care products for women of colour. The firm was called Madam

C. J. Walker Manufacturing Company and was established in 1910 in the United States. Madam Walker's great, great granddaughter, A'Lelia Bundles, had access to oral history passed down by family members and to both personal and company archives including letters, legal documents, and print advertising materials. Bundles used such documents, often quoting from them directly, to write *On Her Own Ground: the Life and Times of Madam C. J. Walker* (2001). Bundles (2001) states that she wrote the book because she "had begun to discover flaws and occasional lapses of truth mixed with the victories and accomplishments. There were difficult divorces as well as business successes, legal feuds as well as large charitable contributions" (p. 21). In addition, with regard to the research she had done and documents and oral stories she had uncovered, Bundles' (2001) mother bid her on her deathbed to, "Tell the truth, baby, it's alright to tell the truth" (p. 21).

#### 4.2.1 Phase 1: Birth – Setting and Life Circumstances

##### 4.2.1.1 Family -Parents

Life and living arrangements were so scrambled after the war that Owen and Minerva, both born around 1828, may have been squatters on the plantation where they lived as . . . slaves since at least 1847. Their African family origins, as well as their faces and voices, are lost to time, silenced by their illiteracy. Because the importation of slaves had been illegal since 1808 . . . it was likely they were born in the United States (Bundles, 2001, p. 26)

Sarah Breedlove was born two days before Christmas 1867 . . . . No official document recorded Sarah's birth . . . . Unlike her slave-born siblings . . . Sarah had been born free just a few days shy of the Emancipation Proclamation's fifth anniversary. (Bundles, 2001, p. 25)

Decades after Sarah had become a well-known entrepreneur . . . she reminded audiences that she had had to fend for herself since childhood, 'I had little or no opportunity in life, having been left an orphan and being without mother or father since I was seven years of age.' (Bundles, 2001, p. 34)

#### 4.2.1.2 Politics/Law

Night riders and vigilantes bloodied Louisiana's back roads during the score-settling campaign of 1868. Still an infant, Sarah was sheltered from knowing about the year's one thousand politically motivated murders . . . (Bundles, 2001, p. 32)

#### 4.2.1.3 Education

During 1874, when Sarah was old enough to enter first grade, public schools in Louisiana---where they existed at all---were shuttered when the state declined to fund them . . . . In some parts of the state, schools were torched, teachers harassed, even killed . . . . Sarah later told a reporter that she had had only three months of formal education. (Bundles, 2001, p. 34)

### 4.2.2 Phase 2: Youth – Foundations for Pursuit of Freedom through Economic Change

#### 4.2.2.1 Family – Wife, Mother, Widow

'I married at the age of fourteen in order to get a home of my own,' Sarah always said of the day she ran off with Moses Mc Williams. (Bundles, 2001, p. 40)

In 1885, during the spring between seventeenth and eighteenth birthdays, her daughter Lelia was born on June 6. (Bundles, 2001, p. 40)

When it seemed Sarah had placed together all the elements of the family she had lost, Moses died probably sometime during 1888. (p. 41). 'I was left a widow at the age of twenty with a little girl to raise.' (Bundles, 2001, p. 43)

#### 4.2.2.2 Economy – Laundress in St. Louis

With little more to encourage her than raw determination, she began plotting her trip to St. Louis . . . . Hundreds of young, single and widowed black women left the South each year during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, seeking jobs, bolting from abusive relationships, seeking better lives (Bundles, 2001, p. 43)

During early 1889, Sarah and three year old Lelia headed north (Bundles, 2001, p. 43). When Sarah and Lelia reached St. Louis, the Breedlove brothers were already familiar figures around the neighborhood around St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church where their barbershop had been located for six years (Bundles, 2001, p. 44).

Sarah's first place---probably more a room than an apartment---was at 1316 Wash Street, a street well known on the police blotter for its stabbings and murders...To support herself and Lelia, she worked as a laundress, 'washing for families in St. Louis,' she told a St. Louis Post-Dispatch reporter years later . . . Sarah and her friends preferred laundry chores, at least in part because they could watch their children while they worked (Bundles, 2001, p. 45-46).

'I was at my washtubs one morning with a heavy wash before me' Sarah later recalled, 'As I bent over the washboard, and looked at my arms buried in soapsuds, I said to myself: What are you going to do when you grow old and your back gets stiff. Who is going to take care of your little girl? This set me to thinking, but with all my thinking, I couldn't see how I, a poor washerwoman, was going to better my condition'. (Bundles, 2001, p. 48)

She was sucked under again and again by family tragedies, an abusive [second] marriage, a dangerous neighborhood . . . she set about to reinvent herself (Bundles, 2001, p. 48)

'I did washing for families in St. Louis, and saved enough . . . to put my little girl in school in Knoxville Tennessee,' Sarah proudly told a reporter years later. (Bundles, 2001, p. 55)

#### 4.2.2.3 Health

When her hair had begun, 'breaking off and falling out,' Sarah later said, 'I tried everything mentioned to me without any result.' Her experimentation soon would lead to as solution, not just for her hair but for her life. (Bundles, 2001, p. 59).

### 4.2.3 Phase 3: Quest – Entrepreneur as Individual with an Idea

‘I was on the verge of becoming entirely bald,’ Sarah often told other women . . . . She ‘prayed to the Lord’ for guidance. ‘He answered my prayer,’ she vouched, ‘For one night I had a dream . . . . he told me what to mix for my hair. Some of the remedy was from Africa, but I sent for it, mixed it, put it on my scalp and in a few weeks my hair was coming in faster than it had ever fallen out.’ (Bundles, 2001, p. 60)

This miraculous concoction, she believed, was nothing less than ‘an inspiration from God,’ a heaven-sent gift for her to ‘place in the reach of those who appreciate beautiful hair and healthy scalps, which is the glory of a woman.’ (Bundles, 2001, p. 60)

Her secret ingredient, she maintained, came not from the sources known to the white-owned hair preparations manufacturers whose ads regularly caricatured black women in the St. Louis Negro weeklies, but from . . . the land of her ancestors (Bundles, 2001, p. 60) . . . . Although nothing in Sarah’s scalp ointment appears to have been available exclusively from Africa, she may well have been referring to her use of coconut oil . . . . (Bundles, 2001, p. 60-61).

Scalp specialists like Sarah . . . considered their work separate and apart from the much criticized hair straighteners. What distinguished them and their motivations was their race. (Bundles, 2001, p. 67)

Regardless of the debates among news editors, power brokers and race leaders, wanting to have hair had nothing to do with mimicking whites. Her main concern was better employment and financial opportunity . . . . “When I was a washerwoman, I was considered a good washerwoman and laundress,” Sarah often recalled; ‘I am proud of that fact. At times I also did cooking, but, would as I would, I seldom could make more than \$1.50 a day; I got my start by giving myself a start.’ (Bundles, 2001, p. 68)

#### 4.2.4 Phase 4: Change in Condition – Entrepreneur as Organization Founder

##### 4.2.4.1 Purpose

Her customers' happiness, once their hair began to grow, was all the proof she needed that she was performing a useful service. She was convinced that she was helping her clients feel more attractive and confident. (Bundles, 2001, p. 78)

The key to her success would not be just her 'secret' formula, but her deep understanding that women wanted to be attractive, as well as her fervent conviction that they needed to be financially independent. Her determination and decisiveness soon would create unimaginable opportunities for herself and for her agents. (Bundles, 2001, p. 91)

##### 4.2.4.2 The Early Days

Not yet divorced from John Davis [her second husband] but living with C. J. Walker, she had grown increasingly anxious about remaining in St. Louis . . . . On Wednesday, July 19, 1905, Sarah boarded a hot, sooty westbound train . . . . (Bundles, 2001, p. 78)

Sarah set out for Denver. . . . Although she had arrived with 'only \$1.50 in my pocket,' Sarah later said of her plan to sell hair care products, 'I was convinced it would be a success.' (Bundles, 2001, p. 81)

In March 1906, perhaps with C. J.'s help, Sarah revised her newspaper ads to reflect her changed marital status, now calling herself Madam C. J. Walker. (Bundles, 2001, p. 85)

In these early months, Sarah remembered, she rarely rested, so determined she was to succeed. (Bundles, 2001, p. 83)

#### 4.2.4.3 Customers

Customers gravitated to her because of her ‘splendid personality’. A charisma and conviction forged from her own difficult journey now shone through as a sincere desire to give excellent service to assist other women. (Bundles, 2001, p. 83)

#### 4.2.4.4 Sales Team of Black Women

When women saw her photo, and heard her life story, they clamored to take her course and sit for her treatments. The twin promises of enhanced beauty and financial gain---not to mention Madam Walker’s own phenomenal personal example---served as a magnet to women who had always believed they would never be more than maids and laundresses. (Bundles, 2001, p. 96)

As 1910 ended, once again Madam Walker’s income had exceeded expectations . . . . (Bundles, 2001, p. 107)

Madam Walker who now claimed 950 sales agents and several thousand customers, shared the vision of harnessing women’s influence (Bundles, 2001, p. 109)

‘Madam is in a fair way to be the wealthiest colored person in America. I am ambitious that she be just that,’ Ramsom [Madam’s lawyer and business manager] revealed . . . . (Bundles, 2001, p. 146)

Within a decade of selling her first tin of Madam Walker’s Wonderful Hair Grower, she confidently informed a reporter that she was “contemplating enlarging her present business into a million dollar corporation” (Bundles, 2001, p. 179)

#### 4.2.5 Phase 5: New Reality – Entrepreneur as Institution in Society and the World

Her money and celebrity, as well as her ability to use both as tools for political activism, provided Madam Walker with an advantage that few other African

American women---regardless of educational background or social status could claim. (Bundles, 2001, p. 188)

Madam Walker envisioned what few had ever imagined: an enterprise on a grand scale controlled by black women with political and civic objectives (Bundles, 2001, p. 189)

#### 4.2.5.1 Black Women's Economic Independence

As an early advocate of women's economic independence, she provided lucrative incomes for thousands of African American women who otherwise would have been consigned to jobs as farm laborers, washerwomen and maids. (Bundles, 2001, p. 15)

Madam Walker arrived in Washington D. C., in early August 1913 to deliver a series of lectures entitled 'The Negro Woman in Business' . . . . 'The girls and women of our race must not be afraid to take hold of business endeavor and, by patient industry, close economy, determined effort and close application to business, wring success out of a number of business opportunities that lie at their very doors,' she repeated all summer. Proud to announce that she was, 'employing hundreds of Negro girls and women all over this country as agents, clerks and otherwise'. . . . 'I have made it possible for many colored women to abandon the washtub for a more pleasant and profitable occupation.' (Bundles, 2001, p. 153-154)

In March [1916] the *New York Age* trumpeted her move to the city with an effusively complimentary article drawing attention to the 10,000 sales agents who sold her products on commission . . . . 'I first want to say that I did not succeed by traversing a path strewn with roses. I made great sacrifices, met with rebuff after rebuff, and had to fight hatred to put my ideas into effect,' Madam Walker proclaimed . . . . 'in Greater New York alone, two hundred agents are engaged in promoting 'The Walker System. I feel I have done something for the race by



making it possible for so many colored women and girls to make money without working hard'. (Bundles, 2001, p. 180)

#### 4.2.5.2 Anti-lynching Campaign

As a political activist, she dreamed of organizing her sales agents to use their economic clout to protest lynching and racial injustice. (Bundles, 2001, p. 15)

[Madam Walker's] association had become what perhaps no other currently existing group could claim: American women entrepreneurs organized to use their money and their numbers to assert their political will (Bundles, 2001, p. 213).

In a 'ringing message' [Madam Walker] spoke of the present war and advised her people 'to remain loyal to their homes, their country and their flag' . . . . 'But we must not let our love of country, our patriotic loyalty cause us to abate one whit in our protest against wrong and injustice,' she declared undaunted by Woodrow Wilson's rebuff after the Silent Protest Parade. 'We should protest until the American sense of justice is so aroused that such affairs as the East St. Louis riot be forever impossible.' (Bundles, 2001, p.212)

Madam Walker's financial status granted her the independence she needed to be able to choose causes and issues rather than sides and personalities. During its September 1917 conference, NERL [National Equal Rights League] voted to demand in 'precise terms' that President Wilson abolish segregation in federal offices and interstate travel, forbid disenfranchisement of black voters, dismantle the peonage farming system and make lynching a federal crime . . . . By the end of the meeting, Madam Walker had been elected a vice-president at large. (Bundles, 2001, p. 214)

#### 4.2.5.3 World War II – Black Troops

Protest and patriotism vied for headlines in the *New York Age* during the summer of 1917 as African American troops trained for the war abroad and Harlem leaders challenged mob violence at home (Bundles, 2001, p. 218).

When the American Red Cross initially excluded black women as volunteers and nurses, Madam Walker agreed without hesitation to join the advisory board of the Circle for Negro War Relief, a group of prominent black women who established a clearinghouse for money and supplies “to improve conditions among coloured soldiers.” (Bundles, 2001, p. 220).

Despite troubling incidents, Madam Walker encouraged the troops to persevere, ‘This is your country, this is your home,’ she reminded them, ‘What you have suffered in the past should not deter you from going forth to protect the lives and homes of your women and children.’ But she did not gloss over the very real discrimination and indignities they faced, vowing to use her influence on their behalf . . . . Several months later, a member of Company D of the 317<sup>th</sup> Engineers wrote, ‘We all remember you, and...have often spoken of you, and of the words of consolation which you gave us at Camp Sherman, Ohio on the eve of our departure. Those words have stayed with the boys longer than any spoken by any one that I have known or heard of.’ Her comments, he said, had even shored them up ‘one night while under shell-fire’ on a French battlefield. (Bundles, 2001, p. 224).

#### 4.2.6 Phase 6: Contemplative Period - World View and Reflections on a Way of Life

“As much as any woman of the twentieth century, Madam Walker paved the way for profound social changes that altered women’s place in American society” (Bundles, 2001 p. 15-16). The final chapter of the (auto)biography is a concluding passage that Bundles titled *I Want to Live To Help My Race* as a summative testament to Madam Walker’s end-this-life comment:

‘It was through his divine providence that I am what I am. For all good and perfect gifts come from above,’ she told her friend . . . ‘my desire now is to do more than ever for my race. I would love to live for them,’ she said, ‘I’ve caught the vision. I can see what they need.’ (Bundles, 2001, p. 269)

Ultimately, however, it was not the final figure in the ledger books that defined the measure of Madam Walker's life, but the promise she bequeathed to future generations that they might realize even greater successes and dream ever more elaborate dreams . . . . In an affectionate parting remembrance, her friend . . . called her, 'the clearest demonstration I know of Negro woman's ability recorded in history. She has gone, but her work still lives and shall live as inspiration to not only her race but to the world.' (Bundles, 2001, p. 277)

Although not written as a textbook in ethics, there are many ethical themes in Madam C. J. Walker's (auto)biography that touch upon many aspects in ethics. Entrepreneurship enabled a quality of life for Madam C. J. Walker herself, her daughter, her sales agents, her customers and ultimately her race. Her actions were self-motivated and her goodwill expanded successively along with her financial rewards. Madam C. J. Walker overcame her circumstances and antipathetic factors in her life. She succeeded to change her condition in life through determination, virtue, a keen sense of duty to others and constant assessment of consequences. According to Frye's (1957) Poetics, certainly Madam C. J. Walker is a "good" character. The literary genre of her life is Comedy, where a good, inexperienced individual succeeds despite a powerful and wealthy society; ultimately, in many ways, she changed a powerful, outdated society for the better.

### 4.3 Estee Lauder – *Estee: A Success Story* (1985)

Estee Lauder (1908-2004) created a skincare and cosmetics company called Estee Lauder Companies in 1946 in the United States. Unlike Madam C. J. Walker's direct sales, commission-based sales agents, Estee Lauder strategically positioned her products in major department stores and negotiated contracts for large orders at a time. Her husband worked with her; however the company and products were her idea and she was the figurehead who oversaw development, production, sales, marketing and training in what is now a worldwide enterprise. She wrote the autobiography for personal reasons, namely to correct many misconceptions about her and her life:

I've never talked about my personal life so openly before. It has always been my feeling, especially when my children and grandchildren were young, that public

personalities should be reserved about their private lives. One's family, after all, has not asked to be spotlighted in a very public glare. All these years I have guarded my privacy because I believed that what achieved in public was the public's right to know, but what mattered in our home was ours and ours alone. With this book, all that changes. I've read so many myths about myself that it's time to set the record straight. (Lauder, 1985, p. 11)

### 4.3.1 Phase 1: Birth – Setting and Life Circumstances

#### 4.3.1.1 Family

My [Hungarian] mother always missed her own mother and disliked her stepmother. Not surprisingly, she married at fifteen to escape this troubled life . . . my mother seldom spoke of her first marriage . . . . Another fact of which I'm certain is that my mother, who came to my father with six children was ten years older than he. (Lauder, 1985, p .6-7)

My [Czechoslovakian] father was a man of many professions. When he first came to America, leaving behind privileged life, he brought with him valises filled with dapper clothes . . . and no profession that was meaningful on these shores. First, he looked for work in the neighborhood. Having little knowledge of English and fewer skills, he met with problems . . . Eventually, he bought a hardware store on Corona Avenue [New York] with savings he brought from Europe. (Lauder, 1985, p. 13)

#### 4.3.1.2 Politics/Law

At home in America her [my mother's] accent tended to isolate us. She spoke a very broken English, with a predominantly German accent, and we were at war with Germany during my childhood. Those foreign sounds fell on the unfriendly ears of those who had loved ones at war---and that was almost everyone. I tried to discourage her from coming to school to speak with my teachers and other parents . . . . my mother wasn't able to read anything to me. In fact, although my father spoke more English, both were European in a very straight-laced way---I

wanted desperately to be 100 percent American . . . when I was young, I shunned my European background (Lauder, 1985, p. 16).

#### 4.3.2 Phase 2: Youth – Foundations for Pursuit of Freedom through Economic Change

##### 4.3.2.1 Economy

My father's hardware store was my own first venture into merchandising. I loved to help him arrange his wares. My special job was creating window displays that would attract customers. How I loved to make those windows appealing! (Lauder, 1985, p. 13)

#### 4.3.3 Phase 3: Quest – Entrepreneur as Individual with an Idea

I was a woman with a mission. I had to show as many women as I could reach not only how to be beautiful, but to stay beautiful. On the way, I hoped in my secret heart to find fame and fortune (Lauder, 1985, p. 46)

##### 4.3.3.1 The Early Days

The American dream is powerfully enticing, but it is a dream. One does not move from rags---poof---to riches by dreaming or starting from zero. (Lauder, 1985, p. 40)

Nothing happened fast. Many stories have surrounded the growth of big business, certainly my big business, and most of them are myths. The most insidious myth of all is the one that promises magic formulas and instant success. It does not happen that way. I cried more than I ate. There was constant work, constant attention to detail, lost hours of sleep, worries, and heartaches. Friends and family didn't let a day go by without discouraging us. (Lauder, 1985, p. 39)

[My husband] Joe and I allowed ourselves to become excited. It was time to consider our next step. Ironically, we began to feel soaringly optimistic, the economy was floundering. Men were desperately searching for work . . . .  
'There's no business, no business at all,' moaned the newspapers. But I knew

that there was business in beauty as long as there was a woman alive . . . a woman in those hard times would first feed her children, then her husband, but she would skip her own lunch to buy fine face cream. (Lauder, 1985, p. 39)

#### 4.3.4 Phase 4: Change in Condition – Entrepreneur as Organization Founder

##### 4.3.4.1 Purpose

I was a woman with a mission. I had to show as many women as I could reach not only how to be beautiful, but to stay beautiful. On the way, I hoped in my secret heart to find fame and fortune (Lauder, 1985, p. 46)

##### 4.3.4.2 The Early Days

Business is not something to be lightly tried upon, flippantly modeled. It's not a distraction, not an affair, not a momentary fling. Business marries you. You sleep with it, think about it much of your time. It is, in a very real sense, an act of love. If it isn't an act of love, it's merely work, not business (Lauder, 1985, p. 54)

We had little experience and no guidelines about whom to trust and whom not to trust in our business relationship. And sometimes we made the wrong choice. As in the box-maker incident. [We learned], When a person with experience meets a person with money . . . pretty soon the person with the experience will have the money and the person with the money will have the experience. (Lauder, 1985, p. 49)

We kept a low profile, kept our sales and profits to ourselves. We stayed out of sight until we were strong enough to compete . . . (Lauder, 1985, p. 89)

##### 4.3.4.3 Strain on Personal Relationships

Success and exhilaration don't always bring wisdom. I am a visceral person by nature. I act on instinct, quickly, without pondering possible disaster and without indulging in deep introspection. This quality can work well in the business world,

where instinct counts and where one must be able to risk and take immediate action, but the same quality can be an irritant in personal relationships . . . . My husband preferred a less frenetic life. I loved a party (Lauder, 1985, p. 32)

One woman, a mischievous new divorcee, said to me over and over again, “Estee, you’re foolish. You’re young and beautiful and stuck with a husband who doesn’t understand you. If you were smart, you’d divorce him. It’s so easy to do her! Start a whole new life . . . . I filed for divorce in Florida. Joe was heartsick, but after many, many impassioned conversations, he complied. It was 1939 when we officially parted (Lauder, 1985, p. 35)

Four years passed. One day Leonard [my son] began to run a high fever, then showing signs of having the mumps. Joe came immediately and stayed all afternoon to worry with me and to read to Leonard . . . I remember that his face shone with the joy of having both parents in the same house . . . . On the fourth night, Joe sat me down in the living room. ‘Estee, what are we doing to ourselves?’ he asked. ‘We should be together’. . . . ‘I know, I made a great mistake,’ I told him, ‘Forgive me.’ (Lauder, 1985, p. 37)

#### 4.3.4.4 Networking and Keeping One’s Word

Generosity is met with generosity. It’s a business tactic as well as a rule of human kindness . . . the war was on. Metal was as scarce as hen’s teeth. The only lipsticks I had were in metal cases, and I had been saving them. There was no alternative. I couldn’t turn down an outstretched hand. I never could. There were eighty two women invited to that luncheon and I gave eighty two lipsticks to the chairperson to use as gifts at the table. My theory held true. Whatever you give comes back to you. Every one of those women belonged to three other organizations . . . . [after]we sold and sold and sold. (Lauder, 1985, p. 72)

#### 4.3.5 Phase 5: New Reality – Entrepreneur as Institution in Society and the World

Estee Lauder has received many honors, the Legion of Honor and the Gold Medal of The City of Paris among them. She was named by Harper's Bazaar as one of the 100 American Women of Accomplishment, has been voted one of the Top Ten Outstanding Women in Business . . . . She is a role model for all women who want to achieve their business goals and enjoy a full personal life. (Book Jacket)

#### 4.3.6 Phase 6: Contemplative Period - World View and Reflections on a Way of Life

Estee Lauder entitled her final chapter, *Wishes, Dreams and Victories*. In it, she describes the process that an entrepreneur might experience and she encourages others about what they can create for themselves and her advice on how to do it,

First comes the shy wish. Then, you must have the heart to have the dream. Then, you work. And work.

From where you sit, you can probably reach out with comparative ease and touch a life of serenity and peace. You can wait for things to happen and not get too sad when they don't. That's fine for some but not for me. Serenity is pleasant, but it lacks the ecstasy of achievement.

I've insisted on the long stretch rather than the gentle reach. I celebrate this sweet country where the work ethic and the beauty ethic walk hand in hand . . . .

Living the American dream has been intense, difficult work, but I couldn't have hoped for a more satisfying life. I believe that potential is unlimited---success depends on daring to act on dreams. How far do you want to go? Go the distance! Within each person is the potential to build the empire of her wishes, and don't allow anyone to say you can't have it all. You can---you can have it all if you're willing to work . . . . No one has to settle for the mediocre if she has dreams of glory.



I've always believed that if you stick to a thought and carefully avoid distraction along the way, you can fulfill a dream. My whole life has been about fulfilling dreams. I kept my eye on the target, whatever that target was. I've never allowed my eye to leave the particular target of the moment . . . whether your target is big or small, grand or simple, ambitious or personal, I've always believed that success comes from not letting your eyes stray from the target. Anyone who wants to achieve a dream must stay strong, focused and steady. She must expect and demand perfection and never settle for mediocrity.

If you push yourself beyond the furthest place you think you can go, you'll be able to achieve your heart's dream (Lauder, 1985, p. 221-223)

Estee Lauder's autobiography is a very different account than Madam C. J. Walker's. She offers insight into other kinds of ethical dilemmas, particularly with family. She does not explicitly state what her goals for society or humanity are, other than to make life beautiful. She is a "good" character according to Frye's (1957) types because she does do the right thing in tenuous circumstances. However, it is difficult to establish a literary genre for Estee Lauder. She did succeed to change her own condition and clearly women continued to purchase her products so they appreciated her work. Without knowing the extent of her goals for society and humanity, it is possible, though, that Estee Lauder's autobiography is a Tragedy. She, as a "good" character, may have joined a dated, wealthy society without bringing any change to it, a possible *homo economicus*. The awards bestowed upon her, mentioned by her publicist, are not necessarily humanitarian in nature. Her parting words are encouraging but, in essence, they only address how one can get what one wants in quantitative terms. Her sense of duty to others is not clear.

#### 4.4 Mary Kay Ash – *Miracles Happen* (1981)

Mary Kay Ash (1918 -2001) was the founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics Inc., a skincare and cosmetics company founded in 1963 in the United States. She wrote an autobiography called *Miracles Happen* (1981). She dedicated the book to "the thousands of women who dared to step out of their comfort zones . . . (Ash, 1981, p. vi) and the purpose of

the book is to inspire women to change their circumstances, believe in themselves and realize their dreams:

This book is for anyone who feels young and who wishes to succeed. You see, God didn't have time to make a 'nobody'. As a result, you can have, or be, anything you want. Every one of us is important and necessary in God's plan. If someone else will just believe in you---you will be able to do *great* things. I know this because someone once believed in me. At a time when I may not have displayed much in the way of experience or skill, someone believed I could succeed. And largely because of this—I did! (Ash, 1981, p. xi)

#### 4.4.1 Phase 1: Birth – Setting and Life Circumstances

##### 4.4.1.1 Family – Parents

When I was seven years old, my daddy came home from the sanatorium: and although three years' treatment had arrested his tuberculosis, he was not completely cured. During the rest of my childhood, he remained and invalid and in need of a great deal of tender, loving care. For all those years, my mother was the sole support of our family. She had been trained as a nurse, but eventually found work as a restaurant manager . . . the job didn't pay as well as such jobs do today, and the salary was undoubtedly lower because she was a woman. (Ash, 1981, p. 2)

I would come home from school and clean the house. Then I would do my homework. Even though some of my duties were supposed to be too difficult for a child, nobody ever told me that. As a result, I just did them . . . preparing meals was often a great challenge . . . if Daddy wanted chicken or chili for dinner and I didn't know how to cook it, I would call my mother. During those days, I rarely had the opportunity to learn anything from her in person---she just couldn't be there to teach me. (Ash, 1981, p. 4)

Our family situation meant that I had to do many things that most children weren't expected to do. For instance, if I needed new clothing, I had to go by

myself to downtown Houston [Texas]. I took these Saturday trips alone, because my best friend was not allowed to travel on a streetcar without an adult. After all, we were just seven years old . . . . When I first began these excursions, I was a little anxious about catching the right streetcar and finding my around. Then I remembered my mother saying, “You can do it, honey.” (Ash, 1981, p. 5)

#### 4.4.2 Phase 2: Youth – Foundations for Pursuit of Freedom through Economic Change

##### 4.4.2.1 Education

By the time I reached high school, my competitive spirit was deep-rooted. I continued to make straight A’s, and I would have liked to be my class valedictorian. But I decided to finish high school in three rather than four years and graduating from summer school ruined my chances . . . so what could I do to compete with my friends who were able to continue their formal educations? And what seemed great to a seventeen year old girl in those days? You’re right: I got married . . . . Maybe I couldn’t go to college, but there was no doubt that *this* was a real feather in my cap. (Ash, 1981, p. 17)

##### 4.4.2.2 Family – Husband

We began our family and started to build a life together. But by the time my husband’s work took us to Dallas, our young marriage had become very unhappy. And, when he left to serve in World War II, I became the sole emotional and financial support to our three children. The worst blow was yet to come---my husband returned from the war and announced he wanted a divorce. It was the lowest point in my life. (Ash, 1981, p. 17)

##### 4.4.2.3 Economy

I had three children to raise. To do that, I had to have a good-paying job with flexible hours. The flexibility was essential because I knew I wanted to spend time with my children when they needed me. Direct sales was a natural solution, so I became a dealer for Stanley Home Products. (Ash, 1981, p. 17)

[My friend] Tillie rescued me again when I was a young career women supporting my family. In those days, there was no such thing as a local day care centre or nursery school. A mother who worked outside her home had to rely on family and friends for safe and loving childcare. (Ash, 1981, p. 16)

I had always dreamed of becoming a doctor. My sales career seemed established and I thought, '*Now is the time*'. . . . Sometimes I would go to bed shortly after the children and set my alarm for 3 o'clock in the morning. I'd get up, drink some coffee and study until the children woke up around seven o'clock. Finally, I could no longer keep up the pace. I was about to have a nervous breakdown, because I was burning the candle at both ends and right up the middle . . . . [I] decided to drop out of college and work full-time selling Stanley products (Ash, 1981, p. 69-70)

I spent twenty-five years building a career in a business world dominated by men . . . . I had some general opinions regarding the structure and operation of a successful business, and some specific opinions about how women might overcome the obstacles I had encountered. So I decided to write a book . . . . I began to dream of a company in which woman had the opportunity to fully utilize their skills and talents . . . . 'Wouldn't it be marvelous,' I kept thinking, 'if someone would actually start such a company?'" (Ash, 1981, p. 22)

#### 4.4.3 Phase 3: Quest – Entrepreneur as Individual with an Idea

##### 4.4.3.1 Idea and Purpose

It doesn't matter if you are married, single, widowed, or divorced---if you are a woman, you walk a unique path in the world of business. This is because that world is still a man's world. The most obvious illustration is in the pocketbook. Nearly half of the nation's workforce is female. Fifty-three percent of all women over the age of sixteen are working (or seeking work) outside the home. And yet women earn an average of only 70.6 cents for every dollar earned by men (Ash, 1981, p. 104)

I wasn't interested in the dollars and cents part of any business, my interest in 1963 was in offering women opportunities that didn't exist anywhere else. At that time, the vast majority of companies simply didn't make room in their executive suites for women. Oh, yes, if a woman was really exceptional, she might become an assistant to a senior officer. But that was about as far as she could go. In twenty five years, I had seen countless capable individuals held back only because they were female. (Ash, 1981, p. 26)

#### 4.4.4 Phase 4: Change in Condition – Entrepreneur as Organization Founder

##### 4.4.4.1 Purpose

I knew that in my company, I did not want to see anyone step on someone else to win a contest. That kind of competition is only destructive! Andrew Carnegie once said, "The first man gets the oyster, the second man gets the shell." A competition in which there was only one winner may motivate some people, but I believe that it usually produces adverse effects. At Mary Kay Cosmetics, everyone has the opportunity to get the oyster, the shell and the pearl! (Ash, 1981, p. 21)

##### 4.4.4.2 The Early Days

When we first started the business, Richard, Ben and I put in sixteen and eighteen hour workdays as we struggled to do anything that had to be done. Sometimes after filling and packaging orders, we would write and mimeograph our newsletter until two o'clock in the morning. (Ash, 1981, p. 40)

My first Beauty Consultants –all nine of them---came with us because they were friends, and because they trusted us when we said we would make it (Ash, 1981, p. 37)

When our company became a publically owned corporation in 1968, I became a millionaire. That poor little girl from the wrong side of the tracks in Houston had finally made it! But I didn't think, 'Wow! I'm a millionaire, so *now* I'm happy' . .

. To me, happiness is, first, having work that you love to do---something you like so much you'd do it even if weren't paid. Second, happiness is someone to love. And, third, it is having something to look forward to. Contrary to the thoughts of many people, happiness is not guaranteed by money. (Ash, 1981, p. 131)

#### 4.4.5 Phase 5: New Reality – Entrepreneur as Institution in Society and the World

Today, in the Mary Kay world, there are thousands of women who have achieved great things in their lives thanks to this career. If you want to read the stories of our top people, I strongly urge you get a copy of the book we publish called *Room at the Top* . . . . We call their personal profiles 'I' stories (Ash, 1981, p. 169).

You'll read about one of our National Sales Directors who had never written a check before her Mary Kay career and now she earns a lot more than the President of the United States. Another National lived in subsidized housing. One escaped from Communist Cuba . . . . (Ash, 1981, p. 169)

For many couples, the wife's success in Mary Kay allowed the husband to leave a career he hated. There's one husband who was an economist. His dream was to open a hair salon! There's another who was an engineer who later became a minister, and so on. (Ash, 1981, p. 169-170)

There are inspiring stories of single mothers who were trying hard to support their families in traditional 'female' jobs such as secretaries, nurses and teachers before they joined Mary Kay . . . . Whether they overcame devastating illnesses, or were stymied by glass ceilings in their chosen professions, I think you'll agree every story has a Cinderella-like quality. (Ash, 1981, p. 170)

#### 4.4.6 Phase 6: Contemplative Period - World View and Reflections on a Way of Life

In her final chapter, *The Proof of the Pudding*, Mary Kay Ash tells how her idea to found a company on integrity and a sense of generosity toward others is not a fairy tale rather it yields exponential intrinsic and extrinsic fulfillment,

Mary Kay consultants come from every imaginable background and represent every religion; we attract young women, women in midlife, and grandmothers. They live in a range of cities and rural towns across the United States and in more than twenty countries on every continent. I wish I could tell you about every one of them, because each has a very special story. (Ash, 1981, p. 169)

With all their differences, they share a common bond---a spirit of living and giving that I believe is unique in the business world. When I began this company, I seemed to stand alone in my belief that a business could be predicated on the Golden Rule. Now, the Mary Kay family has shown that women can work and prosper in that spirit while achieving great personal success. (Ash, 1981, p. 169)

For some of our women, success may mean earning enough money to send their children to college or buying larger homes. Others set far higher financial goals. However they may define success, Mary Kay women agree that their faith and their families come before their careers . . . (Ash, 1981, p. 169)

Throughout this book, I have told you about many of the Consultants and Directors who have reached both professional and personal goals. I believe their stories illustrate the real success of Mary Kay Cosmetics. The most valuable assets of our company cannot be found on our balance sheets, for our most important assets are our people. No matter how much profit a company makes, if it doesn't enrich the lives of its people, that company has failed. Our true wealth is measured by the thousands of women who have found our company to be the way to live richer, fuller lives for themselves and their families. In my opinion, that's the *proof of the pudding*. (Ash, 1981, p. 170)

Mary Kay Ash's autobiography is written in an optimistic and sympathetic manner. She tells of all her early hardships as-matter-of-fact circumstances instead of harrowing personal tragedy. Her good will to her customers, sales agents and to women overall is the foundation of her company and success. It is difficult to see Mary Kay Ash as anything other than a "good" character according to Frye's (1957) two types. She, like Madam C. J. Walker, falls within the literary genre of Comedy. She changed her personal

circumstances without lapses in integrity and she uplifted many others by creating opportunity and change in a wealthy, dated society.

#### 4.5 Anita Roddick – *Body and Soul* (1992)

Anita Roddick (1942-2007) is the founder of The Body Shop, a skincare and cosmetics company that was established in 1976 in the United Kingdom. The title of her autobiography is *Body and Soul* (1992) and she states two reasons for the book: education and philanthropy.

##### *Education*

Much of what I have learned will be found in this book, for I believe that we, as a company have something worthwhile to say about how to run a successful business without losing your soul. This is not a conventional autobiography nor is this a conventional business book. But there is a lot of my life in this book because it is, after all, the story of a personal vision . . . . I'd like to think there are no limits to our family, no limits to what can be achieved. I find that an inspiring thought. I hope you do too. (Roddick, 1992, p. 7)

##### *Philanthropy*

I am donating all my royalties from this book to the entrepreneurial spirited people and organizations working to right social wrongs. They will include UNPO, the Unrepresented Nations and Peoples' Organization, a self-governing, self-help organization made up of the world's "voiceless" people: the Kurds, the American Indians, the Tibetans and others learning from each other's experiences and providing legal, media and other professional services. Also, the Medical Foundation, a team of doctors who provide physical and psychological help to victims of torture: and to people like Nicu Stancesceau, a prisoner of conscience and torture himself, who is setting up a printing press to disseminate information, free from state censorship, to the people of Romania. (Roddick, 1992, p. 6)



## 4.5.1 Phase 1: Birth – Setting and Life Circumstances

### 4.5.1.1 Economy

My mother was the cook and my grandmother peeled the potatoes in the garden out back. As soon as we were old enough, all of us children were expected to help in the café after school and at weekends, taking orders, cleaning tables, washing up, buttering endless slices of bread, operating the till. The work ethic, the idea of service was second nature to us—perhaps because we were immigrants . . . . (Roddick, 1992, p. 24)

My mother was tough with all of us. If she sent me to the butcher's to get some meat and she did not like the joint I brought back, I would have to go back and change it. It was not an easy thing to do when you were ten years old. (Roddick, 1992, p. 28)

### 4.5.1.2 Family - Parents

At home we all slept in one room and rented off the other bedrooms to make money. Lydia and Velia shared one bed, my mother and I shared another and my father slept in a third bed behind a curtained partition. (Roddick, 1992, p. 24)

### 4.5.1.3 Education: As a School Girl

School became a joyous passage in my life and I became an absolute pain in the neck for other pupils because I was so in love with learning. I can remember leaving school every Friday absolutely exulting in all that I learned during the week. The burden of it was so fabulous, I felt so powerful knowing more each week. My teachers were exceptional. (Roddick, 1992, p. 39)

### 4.5.1.4 Politics/Law

Maybe it was the family upheavals that paved the way for another experience that devastated --- and changed me--- at the same time. At home one day, I picked up a paperback on the Holocaust. There were six pages of photographs from Auschwitz and they made such an impression on me that I can describe every one

of them today. Riveted, stunned, I sat on a little stool near the electric fire trying to comprehend . . . . It was a brutal crash course in injustice. (Roddick, 1992, p. 39)

## 4.5.2 Phase 2: Youth – Foundations for Pursuit of Freedom through Economic Change

### 4.5.2.1 Education: As a Teacher

[The students] were proud of themselves, and proud of what they achieved. I got them to lay out their best work on big boards, each drawing a poem or essay beautifully framed and separated by ribbons. It looked magnificent and I arranged to have it displayed at the Southampton Art Gallery where everyone could see what creative achievements these children were capable of. (Roddick 1992, p. 52)

### 4.5.2.2 Economy

I enjoyed teaching, but I still had itchy feet and yearned to join all those other young people I had seen on the hippie trail...I worked in the department of women's rights at the International Labour Organization, gathering information about women in the Third World and organizing seminars and conferences. I learned from the UN the extraordinary power of networking but I was appalled by the money that was squandered on red tape and all the wining and dining that was going on with no apparent check on expenses. I found it offensive to see all those fat cats discussing problems in the Third World over four-course lunches at the United Nations Club. (Roddick, 1992, p. 52)

### 4.5.2.3 Family – Husband and Children

Gordon had trained as a farmer, but his real interests were writing---poetry and short stories---and travel. He was then twenty-six and had already worked his way round the world: tin mining in Africa, sailing down the Amazon in a canoe, sheep farming in Australia (Roddick, 1992, p. 55).

In fact, we did not have a courtship so much as an intensive investigation of each other, of our lives and hopes and dreams. Our personalities were very different,

but we shared a great deal in terms of values. We both espoused vaguely left-wing radical politics. We were both members of the CND [Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament] and had tramped the streets on Ban the Bomb marches. We both had well-developed social consciences, instinctively supported the underdog, worked for what we believed were good causes, and raised funds for charities like War on Want and Freedom from Hunger. For an intense four days, we walked around Littlehampton talking, talking, talking. (Roddick, 1992, p. 56)

Justine was only fifteen months old when I found I was pregnant again. Before I got to look too much like a barrel, we decided to take a trip to the United States. (Roddick, 1992, p. 58).

As we were driving into the city [to Reno, Nevada] along a highway lined on both sides with wonderfully tacky, neon-lit marriage parlours, we decided, on the spur of the moment to get married . . . . That was our wedding day. My wedding outfit comprised a pair of tattered corduroys bulging at the waist and a red rain slicker, worn with sneakers and a howling baby in a harness on my back. (Roddick, 1992, p. 59)

All my life I had been drilled to observe as strict work ethic: Gordon too, enjoyed work. But after three years of running the hotel part-time and the restaurant full-time, we were literally worn out. We were rarely home before one o'clock in the morning and were often so tired we could hardly drag ourselves up the stairs to bed . . . . One night when we crawled into bed Gordon voiced what I had been thinking for some time. 'This is killing us,' he said, 'Let's pack it in'. (Roddick, 1992, p. 66)

### 4.5.3 Phase 3: Quest – Entrepreneur as Individual with an Idea

#### 4.5.3.1 Idea and Purpose

I sat down and discussed it with Gordon, telling him the kind of shop I was thinking of opening was one that sold cosmetics products in different sizes and in

cheap containers . . . the other half of the equation was that I wanted to try to find products made from natural ingredients . . . . I knew that for centuries women in ‘underdeveloped’ areas of the world had been using organic potions to care for their skin with extraordinary success . . . . (Roddick, 1992, p. 69)

To me the desire to create and to have control over your own life, irrespective of the politics of the time or the social structures, was very much part of the human spirit. What I did not fully realize was that work could open the doors to my heart (Roddick, 1992, p. 78).

#### 4.5.4 Phase 4: Change in Condition – Entrepreneur as Organization Founder

##### 4.5.4.1 Purpose

It was because our thinking was forged in the sixties that we took a holistic view of business, one in which saw ourselves not just as a creator of profits . . . but as a force for good. Working for the welfare of our staff, for the community and ultimately for the future of the planet itself (Roddick, 1992, p. 142).

##### 4.5.4.2 The Early Days

The Body Shop succeeded for two principal reasons. First of all, I simply had to survive when Gordon was away. The underlying drive that kept me going was that I had to eat and the kids had to be fed and clothed. It was pure survival: I knew that somehow or another I would have to find the reserves of energy to overcome whatever problems arose. Second, to succeed you have to believe in something with such a passion that it becomes a reality. (Roddick, 1992, p. 87-88)

##### 4.5.4.3 Customers

Without entirely understanding it, and certainly without my planning it, the shop seemed to appeal to a lot of different kinds of customers --- to students, young mothers, day trippers, foreign visitors. Even guys liked to come and look around. Women from my mum’s age liked the notion of returnable bottles, perhaps because it reminded them of those thrifty days during and after the war. It was

classless, friendly and stylish: people felt comfortable even if they were only browsing (Roddick, 1992, p. 80)

#### 4.5.4.4 Employees

From the start we ran the company in an informal way, as if we were all one big extended family---and in many ways we were. The first manager's meeting was held in the front room of my mum's house (Roddick, 1992, p. 99)

Although we had been trading for five years we sometimes found it hard to believe what had happened in those years. Here we were, a poet and a teacher running an international company that was growing at an unbelievable rate. (Roddick, 1992, p. 104)

#### 4.5.5 Phase 5: New Reality – Entrepreneur as Institution in Society and the World

##### 4.5.5.1 Third World Trade

I never had any doubt that the Third World needed work rather than handouts. Trade gives people in the Third World the ability to choose their destiny when they meet pressures of the west, and helps them utilize their resources to the benefit of their own social, cultural and material needs...most multi-national companies didn't give a damn about the Third World: their only interest in it was a source of cheap labour and extra profits. We believed [our program] Trade Not Aid was likely to be the most effective way to alleviate suffering and poverty around the world, and over the next few years from 1987 we refined the ground rules into an international trading policy. (Roddick, 1992, p. 165)

Fundamentally what we have learned is that the art of giving is not simply the act of doling out money; neither is it dishing out things we assume people want. It is the ability to work with them, and to figure out what they truly need. By the same token, development is not a process of entering a country and inflicting some

blueprint, some master plan on the population. It is the process of helping people find the right tools, the right approach to develop themselves. (Roddick, 1992, p. 185)

#### 4.5.5.2 Environmental Issues

It is hard to know which of our campaigns have been the most successful...but in terms of empowering the staff, instilling in them the belief they are the most powerful people on the planet, Stop the Burning, our campaign to save the rainforest, probably had the most impact. It was an issue that captured everyone's imagination, involved the whole of my personal family and the whole of The Body Shop family . . . the rainforest Indians, the true custodians of the forest, had taken the brunt of this destruction. They had been thrown off their land, murdered, decimated by diseases against which they had no immunity, and used as cheap labour. The loss of plant and animal life was incalculable—the rainforests provide the sole habitat for half the species of the earth, many of which still wait to be discovered. (Roddick, 1992, p. 187)

For us, what was initially a four-year project is now a total lifetime commitment which we will never abandon. No species faces extinction without a fight even if that battle is against the massed might of western consumerism. Our job now is to show that there is an alternative and it's so incredibly simple. It is just a basic exchange of resources carried out in a traditional manner—a token of friendship and respect. (Roddick, 1992, p. 213)

#### 4.5.6 Phase 6: Contemplative Period - World View and Reflections on a Way of Life

In her final chapter entitled *Towards a New Age*, Roddick delivers her ultimate message to entrepreneurs who will read her book:

I think the value of money is the spontaneity it gives you. There are too many exciting things to do with it right now to bother about piling it up, and in any case

it is ennobling to give it away. It makes you feel better, and if you feel better you are better, spiritually. Make no mistake about it—I am doing this for me . . . .

I believe that young people of my daughter's age, the children of the hippies, are going to come forward with a moral code, with a passion, a zest for the moment, and prove to be planetary citizens, the ones who will keep this planet alive. My generation has certainly not done much to keep it going.

Business can make a contribution by facing up to moral choices about profits and responsibilities. In The Body Shop we intend to continue to proselytize our values in hope that one day the cosmetics industry will wake up and realize that the potential threat of The Body Shop is not so much economic as simply the threat---if that it can be called---of good example. (Roddick, 1992, p. 256)

Anita Roddick used her autobiography as both an educational resource on business as well as a call to action for change in both environmental and Third World trade issues. She was an early example of ethical consumerism in that her alternative products stimulated people to think about what they were purchasing, and the social and environmental effects of their purchases. She is a “good” character by Frye’s (1957) classifications and she too falls within the literary genre of Comedy. She prompted change in a dated, wealthy society and enhanced the quality of life for customers, suppliers and inhabitants of the planet.

## 4.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I presented selected citations from four autobiographies written by iconic entrepreneurs. Their times, places, and circumstances varied, however a number of resonating particulars emerged: they used entrepreneurship to first enhance their own condition, then to improve the lives of customers and employees; and, finally, in three cases, to make a profound difference in the world. The evolution of each entrepreneur exemplifies the themes in the scholarly sources summarized in Chapter Two: the nature, ethical dilemmas and ethical decision making across the entrepreneurial cycle of individual with an idea, organization founder and institution in society and the world. The

similarities in themes will be discussed further in the next Chapter. The use of Frye's (1957) Poetics, his six phases of literary plot, allowed for focused presentation of the lives of each entrepreneur. Having established their plot, the overall character of each entrepreneur was evaluated and the literary genre could be deduced. The exemplary entrepreneurs are all "good" characters and three of their life stories fall within the literary genre of Comedy, where a good character succeeds and changes an outdated society. While not applied directly, the ethical theories, virtue, duty to others, consequences of actions, and moral ecology do manifest respectively, as argued in Chapter Three, in character, literary plot, literary genre, and Poetics. The use of autobiography in combination with Frye's (1957) Poetics, is an interesting and potentially fruitful means to meet the educational aims of knowledge about the world, moral imagination and inspiration. In the next chapter, I draw together the three literary sets presented: the scholarly sources, Frye's Poetics and the autobiographies in order to explicate further Poetics as a grounding foundation, instructional approach and authentic resource to teach ethics to entrepreneurs, to pursue an understanding of human nature in the pursuit of freedom through economic change and to answer the primary ethical question, *What is a good life?*



## Chapter 5

### 5 Major Ideas, Limits, and Significance

The purpose of this chapter is to draw together major ideas informing the research aims of my dissertation: first, to characterize the entrepreneur, the entrepreneurial setting, and entrepreneurial cycle; second, to summarize significant perspectives contributing to authentic education in ethics for entrepreneurs; and, third, to identify limits as well as to provide introductory reflections about the significance of my work.

#### 5.1 Characterization of the Entrepreneur, Setting, and Cycle

##### 5.1.1 The Entrepreneur as Liberal Artist and Poet

In Chapter Two, I presented Cornwall and Naughton's (2003) view that "in order to talk about the virtues of the entrepreneur, we first need to have a concept of how we characterize the entrepreneur" (p. 65). This section answers Cornwall and Naughton's need and expands upon it to include a characterization of the setting in which the entrepreneur operates and the cycle through which entrepreneurs appear to evolve.

According to theoretical and empirical inquiry, the entrepreneur is essentially ethical and is trying to do his or her best to maintain personal integrity, to enhance the quality of life of customers and employees, and to make a meaningful contribution to his or her family, society, and humankind. As a creator and commenter on life, the entrepreneur is reasonably classified among liberal artists, or poets. The alternative account of the entrepreneur as the instrumentally rational *homo economicus* may characterize the essence of some entrepreneurs but not of the majority; indeed, the *homo economicus* may be a reduced position of the liberal artist when overwhelmed by personal, financial, and institutional strains. A complete account of the entrepreneur must acknowledge this but, based on the scholarly literature and the autobiographies, such a characterization cannot be relied upon as the primary stance that conceptualizes the entrepreneur. Many sources connect the freedom that underpins entrepreneurship to be no different than the freedom that inspires poetry; both for the individual as a creator and the employees, customers, or

humanity as consumers. Entrepreneurs as individuals with ideas are liberal artists, poets, because they create something new that communicates an idea about life; they seek freedom and ethical change, not simply economic change.

Three of the four exemplary entrepreneurs I highlighted in this dissertation demonstrated alignment to the conception of entrepreneur as liberal artist or poet. Their business aims and ideas were crafted to improve their and their families' quality of life. As each of them progressed to establish an organization, their firm and products were initially designed and continually refined to ensure a high quality of life for customers and employees..

### 5.1.2 The Entrepreneur in a Conservative and Challenging Setting

As individuals pursuing new ideas, entrepreneurs encounter a number of ethical dilemmas in general business dealings, including strains on personal relationships and difficulties in interactions with large companies. They struggle to find simple, innovative ideas to enhance their own and others' quality of life; and they are required to persevere and to muster the personal gumption to transcend the workload, long hours, and dissenting views that they encounter in the early days. As organization founders, entrepreneurs experience new kinds of ethical dilemmas in leading employees and continuing to keep their vision and ethical standards in place. They experience resistance from larger firms who wish to either buy them out or to stymie their success. In larger, publically traded firms, the entrepreneur must please shareholders, a fact that may compete with his or her allegiance to customers. As an institution, entrepreneurship experiences pressure and opposition by the media, or by unfair or corrupt government, finance, and legal systems. Entrepreneurs operate in an setting where larger firms use legal systems for revenue generation from legal decisions, where government is influenced to legislate barriers to market entrance, where social norms may be legal but not ethical, where whistle-blowing may be ignored resulting in financial or reputational damage, and where law enforcement is difficult.

All four iconic entrepreneurs shed light on the various pressures mentioned in the scholarly sources with regard to the temptations and opposition that an entrepreneur encounters when either attempting to change market or social conditions. They

demonstrate the realities of unfairness, corruption, and personal strain both financial and ethical. The iconic entrepreneurs continued and thrived because they, overall, maintained personal integrity, generosity to others, and high quality exchange with employees and customers.

### 5.1.3 The Entrepreneurial Cycle as Individual and Collective Freedom

Many entrepreneurs do not succeed and either leave this vocation or try another idea. The entrepreneur that remains in the vocation has the potential to progress through three basic phases: idea generation about a need for change or improvement, founding an organization to deliver this improvement on a wider scale, and expanding to such an extent that he or she is now a social or global icon. Despite challenges, entrepreneurs systematically replace larger, dated firms, and social institutions.

As an organization founder, the successful entrepreneur maintains high quality products and value for exchange, and enhances the lives of customers and employees. The entrepreneur as institution in society and the world installs an optimism for the future and for a better standard of living. While merchants have existed for a long time, entrepreneurship is a relatively new phenomenon in human history and despite its shortcomings, appears still to create higher standards of living than centrally planned economies such as imperial and socialist settings. In the past, capitalism was created as not only an economic but moral response to feudal and other centrally-governed wealth and ownership systems. Capitalism, now in place for a few hundred years, has possibly evolved into a new, metaphoric monarchy and feudal system where ownership and income are still mainly centrally coordinated by a few corporations. The entrepreneur, as liberal artist and poet, is looked to for a remedy in capitalist economic settings, just as he or she is looked upon to correct other centrally planned economies. In the scholarly literature cited in my dissertation, European and North American scholars anticipate the contributions of the entrepreneur today in a similar way that these same countries initially looked to capitalism a few hundred years ago as a remedy to imperialism; anticipation is not dissimilar to the expectations noted by contemporary scholars writing about aims and activities in emerging free-market economies such as China and Russia. The popular, customer sanctioned entrepreneur is to redistribute wealth **and** justice. The entrepreneur

corrects institutions of many kinds. For better or for worse, entrepreneurs, like other popular, liberal artists and poets, can be conceived to be versions of contemporary moral philosophers of their times because they are inextricably connected to ideas and are a means to a better quality of life.

All four exemplary entrepreneurs progressed through the full spectrum of the entrepreneurial cycle. While it is not empirically clear whether or not they replaced firms or expanded economic markets in the beauty industry, it is clear that three of the four made substantial institutional change at a social and political level. At each stage, the financial and political influence the entrepreneurs were able to yield was a direct result of continued support from customers who funded, one transaction at a time, their activities and employees who mobilized their ideas. Their products and actions were advanced collaboratively by means of agreement, not force or authority.

When three of the four entrepreneurs, Madam C. J. Walker, Mary Kay Ash and Anita Roddick, attained significant financial and political status, they used their position to advocate widespread change and to correct injustices in existing political (moral) and economic institutions. Madam C. J. Walker made substantial contributions in race relations and in black women's economic independence; Mary Kay Ash provided greater economic independence for women; and Anita Roddick educated, advocated, and realized much needed awareness and change in environmental and Third World trade. Each of them state their successive aims were primarily ethical over financial. Estee Lauder's autobiography leaves questions in terms of her aims and contributions to society and humankind. However, even if she is more suitably classified as a *homo economicus* leaning toward technical and financial finality, she demonstrates that this category is not necessarily comprised of deviants, rather individuals rationally and instrumentally oriented, who do in fact create a lot of jobs.

All four exemplary entrepreneurs acted within a democratic political structure and a decentralized economic structure, ideologically good societies. These democratic, albeit dated, societies were in need of revision and correction in race relations, women's and racial economic freedom; the iconic entrepreneurs ultimately did succeed because the

institutional conditions necessary for their success were present. Madam C. J. Walker was able to mobilize her sales force for political ends and Anita Roddick was able to use her stores and education centres for environmental and Third World issues. It is not likely any of the exemplary entrepreneurs would have attained the personal or social, and certainly not financial, success that they did were they to have functioned in an imperial or centrally planned economic structure.

## 5.2 Authentic Education

### 5.2.1 Where Entrepreneurs Seek Education in Ethics

According to current literature, and confirmed through the exemplary entrepreneurs whose autobiographies were presented in Chapter Four, entrepreneurs rely largely on popular, literary sources rather than theory or institutionalized knowledge for ethics education; they seek support from family and friends, teachers and mentors, customers, their faith, education, and personal integrity to support their ethical decision making. As founders of organizations, entrepreneurs have access to consultants and sometimes use frameworks created in business schools. As an institution in society and the world, entrepreneurs rely on the integrity of other institutions including education, government, law and religion; however, as described above, the individual entrepreneur is central in effecting not only economic but also political (moral) change through the entrepreneurial cycle.

### 5.2.2 Recommendations from Scholars who Teach Ethics

General educational aims for aspiring entrepreneurs include understanding about a purposeful life and cautions about the limits of technical and financial finality. There are three specific educational aims: first, knowledge about the world and a capacity for ethical reflection; second, moral imagination for a better future; and third, inspiration and a belief in oneself. As educational resources, textbooks are limited because they mostly address large corporations and present uncoordinated ethical theories; instead, literary arts are favored by instructors, particularly real life exemplars. Stated criteria for preferred educational resources include:

- i) content about everyday matters in addition to large, strategic issues;
- ii) concrete examples;
- iii) examples of proactive, not reactive approaches to ethics;
- iv) a method through which an aspiring entrepreneur can determine which ethical theory applies to which circumstance;
- v) the development of thinking and skills to break through inculcated traditions;
- vii) a real, authentic characterization the entrepreneur (not exclusive coverage of the media hero, rogue or trickster or the scholarly *homo economicus*);
- viii) a comprehensive view of entrepreneurs' moral ideals situated within a flourishing life;
- ix) broad consideration of a range of stakeholders—acts and outlooks; full evolution of thought and circumstances.

Instructors state that the learning setting should be inclusive and non-judgmental as aspiring entrepreneurs engage in their process of self and world discovery. Instructional methods include questions, of self and educational resources, and practice in order to apply and test their ethical hypotheses in order to develop moral maturity. The use of Frye's Poetics applied to autobiography can satisfy all recommendations made by scholars.

### 5.2.3 Review of Frye's Poetics as a Grounding Foundation

. Frye's Poetic method applied to literary sources such as autobiography differs from the study of authoritative, legal documents, religious scripture, and academic theory in that literary sources and autobiography are widely accessible, are not necessarily institutionally sanctioned and they do not necessarily conform to tradition or pre-established, formal structures. In addition, Poetic method and literary sources can reveal human nature itself in an objective way, meaning anyone can read a text and anyone can experience directly ethical messages presented in a text. At various points throughout

scholarly history, views similar to Frye's have been defended from rigid theories or rote methods; the aims and products of Poetics, creation and belief, too, have needed protection in institutionalized ideas, particularly the theoretical lineage from Plato to Aquinas to Descartes to neo-Kantian scholars who favor subjective authority and reason over the direct observation of human creation and belief (Spingarn, 1963, Edmunson, 1995, Machan, 1999, Seaton, 2014). Entrepreneurs have been integral in supporting such views as early as the Renaissance period, a time when merchants funded Poetic scholarship that safeguarded intellectual and ultimately political, freedom.

Instead of narrow theories or methods, Poetic approaches to education—particularly Frye's (1957) system---allows “the mind to play freely around a subject in which there has been much endeavor” (p. 3). Frye's Poetics is a liberal and democratic approach to education because limited, politically situated lenses are not superimposed to lead students to narrow conclusions especially in broad, personal, debatable topics such as ethics. Such a view does not propose or endorse anarchy because widespread affinity among people and shared social aims are readily observable, rather Poetics is a popular means to ensure intellectual and political freedom toward individual and social goals across humanity. While Poetic resources are not necessarily historically accurate, empirically proven, or theoretically grounded, their premises of creation and belief are nevertheless compelling and very popular; and, they nevertheless do persist as do their expansive, popular, world views.

The entrepreneur, characterized as a liberal artist performing a fundamental role in the economic and political freedom of individuals and society, needs education programs, instruction, and resources foundationally consistent with such ends. Entrepreneurs are not rule-breaking radicals; they are creators who change society and contribute to humanity by improving the quality of life of customers, one by one. Entrepreneurship is a liberal pursuit and, according to Frye, Poetics and literature constitute the very essence of education that can reveal ethical themes including a broader world view and the respective life an individual chooses to create according to such a view.

### 5.2.4 Alignment, Simplicity, and Usefulness of Frye's Poetics

In Chapter Three, I detailed why Frye's Poetic, liberal ideas fundamentally align with the educational aims presented in the scholarly literature: knowledge about the world, moral imagination and inspiration. I relied on Frye because his framework allows for focused yet open-ended observation and permits multiple explanations and conclusions. I expanded on Frye's framework because it potentially introduces a promising meta-ethical perspective, which I applied to the four autobiographies and will discuss further in this section.

The premises that motivated Frye's perspective and undergird his Poetic system include, first, that the sympathetic, inductive study of primary sources will reveal higher truths about human beings and humanity, transcending social circumstances, time, or place; second, imaginative and popular works are ethical instruments because they provide new ideas that foster moral imagination which stimulates action toward higher realities; and, third, imaginative and popular literary works are a means of ethical criticism through which an individual can evaluate his or her own time, place, and circumstance within broader world views and higher truths.

Frye's Poetic principles of sympathetic, inductive, and primary provide a simple, accessible way to discover human nature through reoccurring themes resonating across varied literary examples such as autobiography. A sympathetic orientation emphasizes a commitment to find unity instead of misunderstanding in human relations, and a belief that truths and common, human aspirations can be found. Inductive analysis allows important themes to emerge from literary sources without leading or limiting analytic frames or theories. The study of primary, unaltered sources, such as autobiography, too, will offer direct insight to ideas. According to Frye, human nature is discoverable through the Poetic process and literary resources including autobiography. The complex metaphysics about human nature contained in each ethical theory are operationalized simply, yet are nevertheless coordinated robustly by Frye's approach and framework.

Virtue ethics, particularly Aristotelean, is favored in the scholarly literature because of its emphasis on the inherent good and agency in individual human nature, extending out to



form “good” societies. Such ideas are consistent with the notion that the entrepreneur, as liberal artist, creates a better quality of life, a free society, and a safeguard for humanity. However, many limits to virtue ethics are identified by supporters of deontology, utilitarianism, and moral ecology. The fundamental premises of Frye’s views on education, too, include, and in fact advocate, the inherent good and agency of individual human nature, contributing to society and humanity; however, Frye’s framework addresses and provides for the reality that sometimes individuals do not act with virtue and that sometimes society holds greater agency than an individual, justly or unjustly.

It would be difficult to name or prioritize the virtues present in the lives of each exemplary entrepreneur. Were the iconic entrepreneurs more courageous than honest, or was honesty more important to their success than courage? Alternatively, using Frye’s notions about character, virtue can be viewed more comprehensively, as a summation of one’s net disposition. All four entrepreneurs, in their own estimations, were “good” characters. Their sense of dignity and worth were intact. The entrepreneurs all reported that they were happy and their success is testament that their customers, employees, and, in three of the four cases, society and humanity, benefitted. Across the entrepreneurial cycle, despite opposition, the international icons did not waver; they persisted in demonstrating an internal sense of “being good” which manifested in their work, success, and contributions. Being “good” does not depend on pre-established lists of virtues or normative theory. Other classifications of virtues are secondary to the overarching virtue of “good” when viewed over a broad timeline, such as a lifespan. ‘Good’ is the accepted, primary qualifier in ethics continuously validated with the perennial question, *What is a good life?*

A character’s movement through Frye’s six phases of literary plot, from birth to the contemplative period, and from inexperience to experience, explicitly reveals *intentions*--one of the fundamental premises in deontology. It also provides a comment on life with respect to compliance with established institutions. In the first three phases of Frye’s literary plot, a character is the effect of his or her circumstances and so is not completely responsible for his or her condition; in these phases, norms, circumstances, and sanctioned rules prevail. However, as a character gains experience and begins to enact his

or her will on the world, either success or failure ensues due to self-determined actions. In literary plot, self and collective interests are weighed in context; as such, duty to others is situated within many factors. Unquestioning compliance with social institutions can become absurd when viewed contextually. Alternatively, radical, self-serving intentions are corrected by “good” societies and various literary genres help demonstrate the consequences of such intentions. Some version of deontological metaphysics does tacitly appear to manifest in Frye’s literary plot and is demonstrated in the autobiographies. Part of Madam C. J. Walker’s personal and financial success was due to her sense of duty toward unfair economic and social institutions, as it was for Mary Kay Ash. Anita Roddick addressed unfair trade and environmental issues, demonstrating that, in part, success is predicated on a duty to care for others. Reckless rule-breaking was not part of any of the exemplary entrepreneurs’ lives; three of them, however, disagreed with social and world systems and used their resources to demand change for a higher standard for others. There seems to be an inherent connection between literary plot, duty to others, and success in the entrepreneurial cycle.

One of the greatest potential contributions of literary genre is the wide and retrospective lens that it provides to view, and teach about, the consequences of actions. Its broad view reveals the outcomes of individualistic rationalizations that might otherwise go unnoticed; and, it specifically addresses the outcomes of financial, technical or moral finality. Because literary genre is determined in the sixth and final literary phase, it is always viewed from an experienced stance and it is based on the consequences of a self-determined action; it *is* ethical reflection. Life, like literary genre, is summative. The theoretical evaluation of isolated series of events is incomplete. The four iconic entrepreneurs achieved their objectives and so all the stories ended well, at least for the most part. None of them experienced the Tragedy of bankruptcy, prison, or government sanction in the dated, wealthy societies that they intended to change. Their lives are forms of divine Comedy wherein they laughed at Fate and changed their own and others’ circumstances despite the chaotic environment and, in three cases, unjust social conditions. In the parting chapters and epilogues, the entrepreneurs presented ethical reflections on how their story ended so that others might also reflect, be inspired and act. They provided their best answer to the question, *What is a good life?* Aspiring

entrepreneurs are under no obligation to accept the iconic entrepreneurs' views; however the examples are useful to aspiring entrepreneurs in defining their own "good" life.

Above, I characterize entrepreneurs primarily as liberal artists and poets, and entrepreneurship as foundationally a creative, ethical phenomenon. As creators of first products and then conditions that ideally enhance the quality of many lives, entrepreneurs, as liberal artists, are ethical agents. The nature of entrepreneurial financial and political (moral) success depends on widespread customer agreement because it is they who fund the entire enterprise. Economic freedom enables social freedom, its own form of moral ecology. In three of the four autobiographies, across time, place, and circumstance, Madam CJ Walker, Mary Kay Ash, and Anita Roddick did prompt change and they contributed to moral evolution to some degree. Ethical perspectives in moral ecology generally study institutional change; however, it is important to see the essence, intentions, actions, and reflective views of the people who enact ethical evolution. Again, Poetics provides individualized, concrete examples of ethical theory; indeed, it is one of the instruments that achieves moral ecology.

### 5.2.5 Autobiography: Ethics Resources Written for Entrepreneurs

As can be seen in both the introductory remarks and epilogues, each entrepreneur shared her life story deliberately for educational purposes. More specifically, Madam C. J. Walker, Mary Kay Ash, and Anita Roddick had specifically ethical objectives for the education they hoped to impart. They do not gloss over the challenges and difficulties in life, they do not promulgate the "rags to riches" myth. They share knowledge about the way the world is, which can stimulate ethical reflection. They foster moral imagination and show that, while challenging, a person can create a difference and change the world if enough others lend support and agreement. They are inspirational because, by their example, they show that, first before anything else, one must believe in oneself.

Autobiography is uniquely authoritative because the entrepreneurs-turned-authors are in the very unusual position to know what the world is actually like across the entire entrepreneurial cycle from idea to institution. They are comprehensive because, unlike controlled studies, they do not elect out certain factors to make research manageable. The

content that I included in Chapter Four is specific to ethics. I synthesized the successive life, intentions and circumstances of the entrepreneurs instead of reporting on the technical and financial elements of the texts. Their life stories also tell what was important to each entrepreneur and in doing so, reveal something about the kind of person who actually ascends all the way to institutional-level status.

The autobiographies are readily available to anyone in libraries and bookstore, and cost very little relative to other forms of education. The data presented in the books is transferrable across many people, is dependable because it is not altered in the transmission process, and is credible because the life stories are not filtered, misunderstood, manipulated or misinterpreted by either biographers or scholars' views or methods.

In this section, I have characterized the essentially ethical, Poetic vocation of the entrepreneur as revealed in the scholarly literature and I have demonstrated converging evidence on the entrepreneurs' ethical, Poetic nature as found in an unrelated, second literary set, the autobiographies. I have explicated Frye's Poetics is an inherently ethical foundation for education well suited to the organization and operationalization of prevailing ethical theories, and to the ethical dimensions of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in both the scholarly literature as well as in the autobiographies. The nature of the true entrepreneur, one who creatively redistributes wealth for self, others and humanity, is that of the liberal artist, the poet; and a fitting method through which to frame, understand and discuss their creative, freedom-focused nature is Frye's Poetics.

I recommend and will use in my own practice both Frye's simplified framework as well as autobiographies to teach ethics to entrepreneurs. This dissertation demonstrates the ethical, literary, and practical validity of doing so.

### 5.3 Limits of My Inquiry

The many limits to this dissertation also present the greatest opportunities for future research. The selection of Poetics as a methodology in general and Frye's theories and methods in particular applied to autobiography may overlook important factors in Social

Sciences research that also could have been useful in the resolution of the research problem. My Poetic sensibility to search for the internal consistency, logic, and “ethos” of the existing literature; that is, not looking outside the eighty two scholarly sources for foundational premises in ethics, literature, education, or entrepreneurship, may ignore conceptual or theoretical positions that do exist elsewhere and could be helpful in informing the topic of educating entrepreneurs in ethics.

Although I tried to be inclusive, the majority of the scholarly sources originate from Western, Anglo-Saxon foundations in decentralized economic settings. The sources from China, Latin America, Russia, South Africa and Nigeria are few in number and may not be representative of broader realities. The fact that I was unable to locate any Aboriginal sources is also a significant drawback to the dissertation. Future research in these settings may refine or significantly alter the favourable view set forth of decentralized, entrepreneurial economies.

The literature considered in my dissertation characterizes entrepreneurship as distinct from capitalism and even as a correction to it. Further conceptual analysis including an examination of ideologies underlying the terms *capitalism*, *liberalism* and *entrepreneurship* is need to uncover the coherence of empirical and moral arguments. Coombs and Daniels (1991) model for philosophic inquiry would yield interesting and comprehensive results.

Frye’s Poetic system was also derived from literature generated in Western, Anglo-Saxon foundations and it is possible that new research in Poetics such as that mentioned in Chapter One in Indian, Latin American, Asian, and Aboriginal studies will refine or even disprove Frye’s Poetic framework. I think this is a fascinating area of inquiry that has the potential to elevate comparative literature, especially autobiography in entrepreneurship, to new heights both ontologically and epistemologically. Another limit or opportunity is my use of Frye’s Poetics to coordinate and organize the major ethical theories. Only a cursory, simple description of each theory was possible and none of their complex metaphysics were mentioned. While this approach has practical and pedagogical merit, further analysis and debate may expose my over-simplification as well as other

conceptual weaknesses; alternatively, additional theory building may strengthen my argument that Frye's Poetics can serve as an organizing stance for ethical theories thereby expanding its application in other fields and studies.

I selected autobiographies written by women in order to ensure that the Poetic criteria of different circumstances were observed; however, each entrepreneur found success in either the United States or the United Kingdom, again Western, Anglo-Saxon settings in decentralized economic conditions. In the future, analysis of autobiographies from other countries such as Konosuke Matsushita's (1984) *Not for Bread Alone* will yield interesting and additional information that will either strengthen or replace the hypothesis and findings in this dissertation. In addition, a comprehensive literary analysis was not possible to compare each autobiography in an in depth fashion to Frye's genres. It is possible that Estee Lauder is better located in the genre of Irony because, while she improved her own conditions, it is not clear that she changed society through her business. While not necessarily a limit of this study, neglecting to find autobiographies representing other literary genres such as Tragedy would limit a robust education program in which students could draw additional ethical conclusions from unfortunate endings. The study of, for example, *No One Would Listen: A True Financial Thriller* by Harry Markopolis (2010) would expose entrepreneurs to Tragedy or Satire.

The autobiographies are forms of historical documents and must be read according to the Poetic element of sympathy. The obvious Judeo-Christian presence in Madam C. J. Walker's and Mary Kay Ash's books are simply indicative of a belief, among many, in a higher force; and hopefully this inclusion will not be misread as either an endorsement or as an indication of primary place over other perspectives. The personal views of each entrepreneur, such as Anita Roddick's thoughts about the United Nations, should be regarded as such; it is not a resonating particular or primary principle.

## 5.4 Significance of My Dissertation

I began inquiry into ethics education for entrepreneurs because I could not find existing, sophisticated, authentic instructional methods or educational resources to support my own consulting practice in which I had discovered a widespread need for services and

materials in this area. I found that the scholarly literature also identified limits and that neither studies nor theory explicitly provided a grounding theoretical framework, consolidated educational aims, a coordinated, fresh way to reconcile major ethical theories for practical use, well defined instructional methods, or worldly resources. This dissertation provides recommendations on an introductory foundation, instructional approach and resources for ethics education for entrepreneurs. My principal tenets on Poetics are clearly presented and I demonstrated their existence in external sources, the autobiographies, in order to show their tenets merit, consistency, and potential.

Current scholars characterize entrepreneurs as liberal artists or poets and instructors recommend literary arts to teach ethics to entrepreneurs. By explicating Frye's Poetics, my dissertation offers a theoretical grounding to link the two independent concepts in the literature. My connection provides an introductory, conceptual premise for further research and for education program development including curriculum design, instructional methods, selection of education resources, and evaluation.

One of the most important contributions of this dissertation is its simplicity and accessibility in terms of its premises, approach, and data sources. My intention has been to offer a foundation, instructional approach, and resources to educators teaching ethics and entrepreneurs engaged in self-directed learning in ethics. I believe the level of language and concepts, although conceptually robust, are easy to grasp and do not require a significant amount of prerequisite knowledge for comprehension and ultimately for use. My ideas and recommendations are readily testable by scholars, consultants, and entrepreneurs for their own purposes.

Although simple, the approach offered is broad in scope and has the potential to coordinate and align previously disconnected research, theory, instructional practice and educational resources. I worked backward from what I observed in my consulting practice and from the many autobiographies and popular business books that I have already read; my approach is consistent with what is presently known and accepted in the setting in which my approach and conclusions will be hopefully used. In addition, this dissertation presents a new way to organize and operationalize the major ethical theories

that are conceptually intricate and therefore practically limited. Just as Frye's Poetics offers a plausible way to coordinate and operationalize ethical theory, further inquiry may reveal that it is helpful also in organizing and using ethical stances in Social Sciences such as character development, personality traits, personal and social values, and social justice, for example. This dissertation introduces the thoughts, experiences, and wisdom of exemplary entrepreneurs into scholarly activities and in doing so it achieves the same outcomes as naturalistic inquiry in Social Sciences pursuits without the intrusions of researcher or instrument in data collection; it democratizes "voice" in scholarly literature. The introduction of autobiography as research objects presents the potential to uncover additional, previously unexplored dimensions of ethics, education, and entrepreneurship.

I have carefully sidestepped widely accepted theory in liberal education because of its reliance on canons that circumvent the freedom of a student to choose his or her preferred autobiographies as educational resources. The four autobiographies that I used, too, as a canon present a world view which reinforces the ontologic and epistemic limits I noted above. Instead, the primary merits of this dissertation are its contribution to theory in ethics education for entrepreneurs, its introduction of a method and its indication of where to look for resources. The use of both Poetics and autobiography presents new ways to approach ethics education for entrepreneurs; and it adds to the literature on the use of literary theory in this area. In addition, by the many limits mentioned above, my dissertation is fruitful of further research. My dissertation offers an accessible, simple approach for entrepreneurs and their educators to realize knowledge about the world, foster moral imagination, find inspiration and uncover answers to broad, iterative, personal questions such as, *What is a good life?*

## 5.5 Future Directions and Inquiry

In this dissertation, I addressed my immediate problem regarding the lack of programs and resources to support ethics education for entrepreneurs. However, there remains much to investigate in various levels of education including secondary school, higher education and continuing education in order to develop suitable, productive education programs including curricula, resources and evaluation. Foremost, Coombs and Daniels (1991) conceptual analysis is needed to clarify the terms entrepreneur and



entrepreneurship in order to further refine and evaluate existing education literature and to ground new curriculum inquiry. Additional research should include an analysis of existing curricula in secondary education, higher education and executive business education programs in order to understand the following two questions: In what ways do existing curricula serve or limit the current and future creative economy including resultant labour market realities? Why are corporate governance and social responsibility ethical theories so prevalent in existing educational resources even though virtue ethics is highly favored and empirically validated in the entrepreneurship literature? Additional inquiry should expand upon and evaluate the use of Frye's Poetics and autobiography in ethics education in entrepreneurship. Administrators, instructors, students and entrepreneurs should be included in research to verify or refine the educational aims cited in my dissertation. Empirical and qualitative inquiry such as surveying should be conducted to understand what entrepreneurs read, why and what they get out of it in the context of ethics education. Knowledge transfer and knowledge mobilization of scholarship in ethics education in entrepreneurship should be emphasized and inquiry into its success and impact should be pursued.

## 5.6 Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I summarized the use of Frye's Poetics as a method in Ethics, I synthesized the three literary sets used in this dissertation and I offered the major tenets and primary principles found with regard to ethics and human nature, education and the pursuit of freedom and entrepreneurship and economic change. I identified some of the limits of the dissertation as well as some of the opportunities for further investigation. Lastly, according to the research problem and aims of this dissertation, I assessed the scope, coherence, simplicity, and fruitfulness of Poetics and autobiography as an instructional method in ethics education for entrepreneurs. The world views discovered in Poetics provides the basis for a way of entrepreneurial life, for predicting outcomes of for decision making about what actions to take. In new and uncertain times, as is often the case in new entrepreneurial ventures, world views, by means of Poetics applied to autobiography, can bring hope and affirm belief in oneself, one's creation and one's purpose.

## Chapter 6

### 6 Concluding Thoughts

In this chapter, I make my closing remarks on the significance of this dissertation and Poetics within the broader research settings in ethics, education, entrepreneurship and the Humanities. The purpose of this dissertation is to build on the work of scholars who use literary theory to characterize entrepreneurs and to frame ethics education, and to recommend a grounding foundation, a broad approach, an instructional tool and authentic resources. I have explicated Poetics and introduced autobiography to assist entrepreneurs and their educators with answers to the primary, perennial, ethical question, *What is a good life?* As ethics is an area in which there has been much endeavor, I wanted to approach the education problem with a simple, accessible paradigm, theory, method and data set---Poetics. This dissertation is a creative, exploratory work and, like Boccaccio, I offer it with the aspiration “. . . that the work will flourish for someone’s benefit . . .” (Boccaccio, trans Guarino, 2011, p. xxxvii). In particular, I hope my dissertation is helpful in future study of ethics, education, and entrepreneurship.

#### 6.1 Ethics

A significant amount of contemporary research in ethics is grounded in either biology (neuroethics), psychology (values), or economics (social justice); and, scholars in philosophy of education founded in ethics work to demonstrate their own methodological merit in a technical and financial, scholarly knowledge market (Hayden, 2012, Vokey, 2006, Ruitenberg, 2009). Many approaches are needed. This dissertation newly considers Poetics as an alternative to ethics framed and studied using continental Authority and analytic Logic; and, it introduces Poetics as a meta-ethical perspective that is interesting and that is fruitful of additional inquiry. The primary question in ethics is, *What is a good life?* It makes sense, then, to study exemplary lives. Autobiography and Poetics provides a means do so.

## 6.2 Education

Several contemporary education philosophers provide a version of a defense of Poetry. Howe (2003) wrote, *Closing Methodological Divides: Toward Democratic Educational Research* in which he advocates broad, conceptually inclusive inquiry. Smith published a series of articles protesting the technical and financial finality of educational research: *To School With The Poets: Philosophy, Method and Clarity* (2008) and *As if By Machinery: The Levelling of Educational Research* (2006). In *Moral Discourse in a Pluralistic World* (2001) and *In Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better: Dialectical argument in philosophy of education* (2009), Vokey reflects on the implications in research and in pedagogy of the fact-value and rational-relative dichotomies. Although not in education inquiry, Van Manen (1986) advocates for democratization in scholarship, particularly in theory and method; he voices his concerns about the inaccessibility of intricate, elite methodologies and the widespread use of a limited number of theorists. In this dissertation, I did not rely on empirical, historical, or theoretical justifications, legitimations or claims to accuracy; my premises are simply creation and belief. My expansion and demonstration of literary theory may just provide an example of what Howe, Smith and Vokey are trying to preserve.

## 6.3 Entrepreneurship

In the literature considered for my dissertation, entrepreneurship is characterized as a new version of liberalism. The scholarly sources and the autobiographies both portray entrepreneurship as distinct from the two major economic ideologies, socialism (largely, centrally planned economies) and capitalism (largely, corporately controlled wealth and income, both making moral claims and providing moral premises. Perhaps the entrepreneur, as liberal artist and poet, personifies true liberalism, both economic and political (moral), emphasizing an individual's right to ownership and income. In *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957), Downs hypothesizes that in any two party political system, ideologies and premises about major issues will eventually converge; and, only in a multiparty system can ideologies remain distinct and therefore can democracy truly prevail. For some time, I have observed that knowledge markets, such as scholarly publication and popular press, are forms of political (moral) systems. I find

Downs' ideas particularly relevant to several dichotomies mentioned in my dissertation that are prevalent in scholarship today: fact and value justifications, technical and financial finality, Science and Social Science inquiry and socialism and capitalism. I have tried to recover, through Poetics, respective additions: justification based on belief, ethical finality, Humanities inquiry, and a call for conceptual analysis of liberalism, both economic and political (moral), as distinct from socialism and capitalism. The notions that I mention here should not necessarily hold primary place in the academy but they do deserve consideration for broad, democratic, useful scholarship.

## 6.4 Humanities

Hartman et al. (2008) state, "Our moral imagination will be stimulated by discoveries of the social and natural sciences, by the insights of artists and writers, and by visionaries of all kinds (p. 262). It is important that disciplinary competence in the Humanities continue to be pursued and included in published and daily academic conversations. I offer this dissertation as an example of what can be contributed through popular literature, Poetics, and the the Humanities: knowledge about the world; moral imagination to change that which one finds out about the world; inspiration to create that which one imagines as a better world; and above all, belief that indeed one can make a difference in the world, as exemplified by a plantation orphan, a war immigrant, a university drop out, a teacher, and today's aspiring entrepreneurs.

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## Appendix 1

### Appendix A: List of Scholarly Sources Cited in Chapter Two

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**Honours and Awards:** Brescia University College  
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Brescia University College  
Research Ethics Board (Member)  
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Best Workshop Award  
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Journal of Interprofessional Care  
Reviewer (Areas of Expertise: Education, Ethics)  
2011 to present

Province of Ontario Graduate Scholarship  
2011-2012

Western Graduate Education Council (Peer-elected)  
2011-2012; 2012-2013

Canadian Association for the Study of Education Administration  
Master’s Thesis Award (Nomination, Honorable Mention)  
2005

**Related Work Experience**

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 2011 to present

Brescia University College  
 Instructor (Issues in Administration; Communications)  
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 Graduate Teaching Assistant/Lecturer  
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 Manager (Education, Student Affairs & Research Library)  
 2004-2009

London Health Sciences Centre  
 Business Coordinator/Acting Director  
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 2001- 2004

Various Ontario Health Facilities  
 Educator/Supervisor (Workforce & Organizational Development)  
 1988-2001

**Selected Publications & Peer-Reviewed Presentations:**

O'Neil, P. (In press). An Introduction to Ethics in Naturopathic Medicine: Virtues, Professional Practice and the Law in P. Snider, J. Zeff, J. Sensenig et al. (Eds.), Foundations of Naturopathic Medicine. United States: Elsevier Inc.

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O'Neil, P. (2012, April). Discussion of ideologies underlying Inter-professional Health Education in the Ontario, Canada Context. International Journal of Cross-Disciplinary Studies in Education.

O'Neil, P (2012, January). Western education philosophies, transdisciplinarity and higher education programming 21st century multicultural democracies. Brescia University College Faculty Colloquium Series. London, Ontario

O'Neil, P. (2012, May). Ethics education for teachers in Ontario's multi-cultural democracy. Ontario Ministry of Education/ Faculties of Education Forum 2012: Visions for learning in the 21st Century. Roundtable Discussion. Ontario Institute for Studies in Education: Toronto, Ontario.

O'Neil, P. (2011, November) Policy, Funding and Legal Debates on the Definition of "Health": Implications for Inter-professional Health Education. Collaborating Across Borders III: Inter-professional Collaboration. Tucson, Arizona USA.

O'Neil, P. (2011, October). Where to in the 21st Century? Transdisciplinarity: an Analysis of Western Education Philosophies from Socrates to Neuroscience. Ireland International Conference in Education, Dublin, Ireland.

O'Neil, P. (2011, January). Toward an ethical philosophy of inter-professional health education. Ontario Conference for Inter-Professional Health Education. University of Toronto: Toronto, Ontario. Conference Proceedings.

O'Neil, P., Boyce, E. & Bushell, P. (2010, October) Achieving EBCP in nursing through a strategic partnership with the library. RNAO Knowledge: The Power of Nursing: Celebrating Best-practice Guidelines and Clinical Leadership Conference. Toronto, Ontario.

McGowan, J., Iansavitchene, A., O'Neil, P., Radar, T., & Sampson, M. (2010, June). Optimizing training to support evidence-based practice and knowledge transfer. Journal of Canadian Health Libraries Association. Vol. 31(2):72.

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O'Neil, P. (2007, August). Southwestern Ontario clinical student placement agreement project: Final report. London, Ontario. (Technical Report)

O'Neil, P. & Allison, D.J. (2005). Searching for useful knowledge: Toward an understanding of leadership fads and fashions. Congress of the Humanities: Canadian Association for the Study of Educational Administration. London, Ontario.